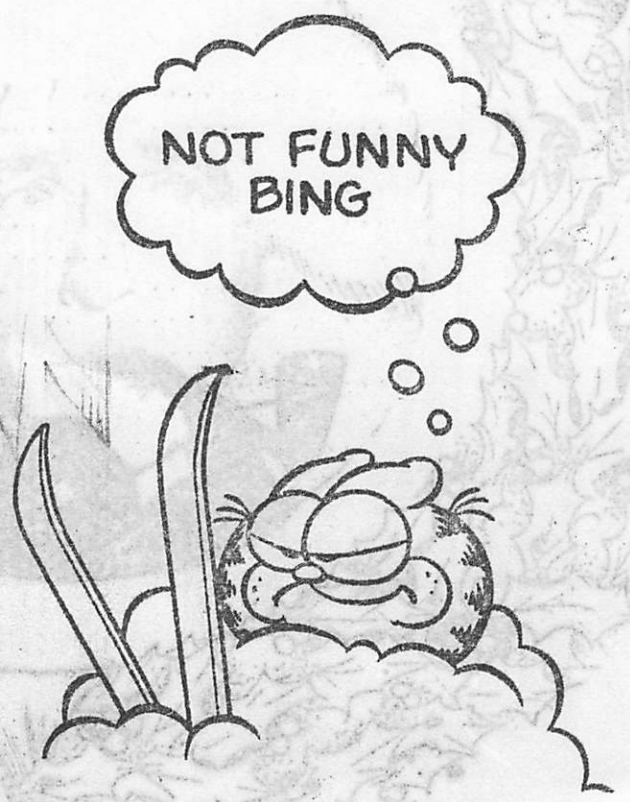
BING

NO 77

THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

december *1985*

I'M DREAMING OF A WHITE CHRISTMAS


NOT FUNNY BING

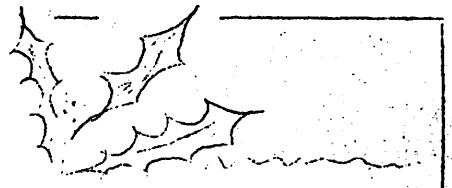
May every joy of the Christmas season be yours, and may the new year bring you happiness.

WITH A SPECIAL THOUGHT FOR THOSE FOR WHOM 1985 hasn't, for various reasons, been much of a year. We sincerely hope 1986 will show vast improvement.

Les Bristo

LESLIE GAYLOR

writes.....



Much as I know a lot of members enjoy my memories and recollections of my long years in Crosbyana, and especially with my happy personal association with Bing himself, time has flown by and owing to commitments that have taken much of my time in the past three months I regret I've been unable to put anything together for inclusion in this issue of BING. I'm sorry about this.

However, I couldn't let this issue pass altogether without taking the opportunity of wishing all members a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year of 1986.

> And I would, despite his invariable reluctance to print such things, like to thank Editor Reg Bristo for his continued enterprise, not to say diligence, in presenting our magazine on such a regular and enjoyable basis throughout the past year - and indeed, all the preceding years. I know just how much so many of you look forward to receiving your quarterly BING.

Judging by the mail that has come to me throughout the year there has been quite some interest amongst members - and non-members for that matter who have somehow sought my address - regarding matters Bing and especially, perhaps, my tie-up with Alan Dell. This has resulted in the Bing 'finale' to his highly popular BBC Radio-2 SOUNDS EASY programme on Sunday afternoons.

Alan now has a considerable repertoire of recordings upon which to draw for future broadcasts, ranging from 1933 to 1977. It consists of film songs, many of the lesser-played recordings and a goodly selection of radio material to give variation. I'm sure Alan will continue to give pleasure to those who love to hear the voice of Bing on radio.

In fact, it occurs to me that members may care to show their appreciation of his efforts in keeping Bing's flag flying high by sending him a Christmas greeting - c/o SOUNDS EASY, Radio 2, London, W1A 4WW.

Again, my best wishes to all for the festive season.....

Editor: Thank you Les, your good wishes are warmly recipr cated, I am sure, by all of us. I trust he won't mind me revealing that his other commitments have been occasioned by the fact that on February 10 next year he will reach the milestone we all reach - with luck! Although he feels fine and loves his work, it is the unalterable rule of his firm that he then retires, having reached the requisite age. I know, too, that Leslie is a little apprehensive that he might not be able to enjoy and, more importantly, respond to the huge mail he gets when he is "on pension" to coin a phrase! So, in wishing Leslie not only the best for Yuletide, we must couple those wishes for his retirement - and if writing and expecting a reply, PLEASE a stamp, or a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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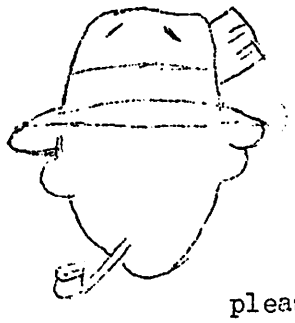

Secretary/Editor:
REG BRISTO,
7 Greenmeadow Close,
CWMBRAN, Gwent, NP44 4PJ

American/Canadian 12 dollars airmail; 8 dollars surface mail. Australian their equivalent to £5 for airmail, £4 surface mail.

AMERICAN/CANADIAN members please note that cheques (checks) drawn on local banks are not acceptable. Negotiating them in Britain reduces their value to vastly uneconomic value. Dollar bills are used by a lot of Transatlantic members and while there may be minimum risk, nothing untoward has so far occurred. International Money Orders too are of course acceptable but it is understood these prove unduly expensive.

Tape/Disc Consultants: Bert Bishop, Tideway, Imperial Avenue, Maylandsea, Chelmsford, Essex.
Lionel Pairpoint, 86 Ellesmere Aven., Mill Hill, London, NW7

Film Consultants: Fred Reynolds, 69 Heathmere Aven., Yardley, Birmingham, BA25 8RQ
Keith Parkinson, 'Meadowcroft', Houghtons Lane, Eccleston, St. Helens, M'side, WA10 5LD

Chief Publicist: Leslie Gaylor, 114 Medina Aven., Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 1HG

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Calamity! Or something like it... Please put down your pens and put away your typewriters for we know! We did think at first to light-heartedly make out it was a Christmas test - but the absurdity of that quickly passed. Face it! The truth is, as so many have already noted, our cover bears the number 77! And, grievously it should be 78! Heads will roll, be assured. We had a reserve cover too standing by - but that bears No. 77. To scrap, apart from being expensive, would have ruled out all hope of you getting this issue before Christmas. So, which of the two calamities was the lesser? That's what we decided. Well, it can be noted as a curio - or you can amend it - the next issue will certainly be No, 79. We did think of all manner of things - like sticking a 78 label over the 77 but no, it would look terrible. So, amidst the anticipated jollity please overlook our failing.

And that's not all! We have two sets of pages 25/26 - due to re-scheduling. Not to worry over this - reading is continuous and there ARE 48 pages. We also have anxiety over the article on the first 24/25 but its such an excellent story we desperately wanted to reproduce it. Independent checkers said they COULD read it !

We recall a conversation, not all that long ago, between some real Crosby addicts and were startled to hear one of them say: "I sometimes wish WHITE CHRISTMAS hadn't happened...." He went on to elaborate to the effect that when Bing was mentioned, at least two generations had grown up thinking Bing Crosby? Oh, the WHITE CHRISTMAS man...the man who sang WHITE CHRISTMAS..." The speaker's point was that the phenomenal success of that Irving Berlin song had done much to obscure the fabulous things Bing had done before - and since - to the extent that those wonderful recordings of his were in real danger of being overlooked.

Perhaps he had a point! An extreme one, to be sure, for how could anyone really regret a song that had sold so many, many millions of recordings, thirty or so of them by Bing. A new fortune, by the way, for Bing, Irving and Decca! One has only to think of the comfort Bing brought to servicemen during World War II, not to mention the civilians. He told in CALL E LUCKY of that song ".....our troupe flew to Cherbourg. We landed there a month and a half after D-Day and worked our way up the peninsula, following our armed forces to Paris...we did three shows a day. Between shows we visited field hospitals or other places where the wounded were cared for.....The look on the faces of the men we entertained was better than money from Paramount. They were so glad to see us. Despite the mud and the jouncing equipment we rode in, the girls in our troupe always managed to put themselves into an exciting-looking gown for each show and do their hair real pretty.

"My big song was WHITE CHRISTMAS. Christmas wasn't far away, and the chances of anyone in our audiences getting home for it were so remote that it was a tough song to sing, but it was asked for wherever we worked."

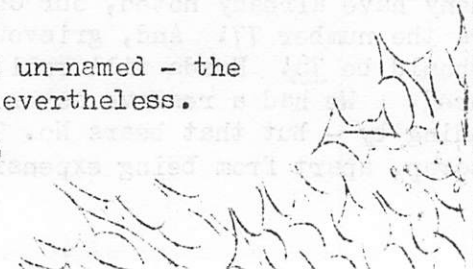
Almost unbelievably, it is now 43 years since we first heard Bing singing this....reget it? Preposterous - but we will not forget LOVE IN BLOOM, JUNE IN JANUARY, THINE ALONE and hundreds of others!

Coming up to date, Volume 4 (and possibly Vol 5) of THE CHRONOLOGICAL BING CROSBY is out; there is (out of the blue!) a new album of high-quality radio material, and - we trust, plenty of good reading for you in the following pages !

Be of good cheer !

Thanks to all contributors, named and un-named - the latter will recognise their efforts nevertheless.

"BING" Original Material (C) ICC 1985



COME TO THE MARDIGRAS!

by KEN CROSSLAND (who is justly proud of his address - Bingham, Nottingham!)

The question most often asked about the annual Crosby gathering in Leeds is - "Why Leeds?" To find the answer you need to go back to a November Sunday afternoon in 1966, when a group of 22 ardent Crosby fans - mainly from the North it should be added - congregated at a smallish terraced house in Leeds and initiated the tradition.

The house in question was that of one Michael Crampton, and that meeting, together with those that have followed, owed much to Michael's initiative - not to mention his long-suffering mother and latterly, his wife. Today, 20 years on, we look back on the growth of the annual get-togethers, thro' different venues and formats, until we now settle - at least for 1985, on our familiar Roundhay dinner setting.

Those late 60's meetings had about them a certain conviviality - created no doubt by large attendances and small rooms! Many who attended those meetings are still attending today - Arnold Pope, George Smith, Charlie Tupper, and having attended in 1969 as a true Crosby novice, even myself. Sadly, others have passed on - notably the fondly remembered "Rhythm Boys" (Vic Gilmore, Frank Briggs, and Alf Farrow, all from Hull) and Mick Drury whose request tape was such a popular feature of those early meetings. The 70's took us first to the Griffin Hotel in Leeds for the ICC 21st Anniversary Dinner, and was followed by three years at a Community Hall in North Leeds. 1975 took us to the Mansion House in Roundhay Park, to which we today make our 11th consecutive visit. My, how time's go by!

Many events stick in the minds of the regulars. The late 60's inevitably had Ralph Harding's hair-raising tales of high speed motorway trips home the previous year. In 1972, Ralph arrived hot-foot from Southport, having been with Bing at a Golf Tournament. 1975 and 1978 saw Ken Barnes attend with some delightful out-takes from the recording studio floor. 1978 also saw the numbers attending peak at over 100 for the first time.

Others will remember 1977 in the glare of press attention, with most of those present still numbed by Bing's passing just two days previously. As ever, Bing himself supported the event to the end, with a taped message and greeting.

Our last "anniversary" event was 1980 and the ICC's 30th Birthday. Some felt that with Bing gone, the meetings would gradually fall away after that year. Happily, they were wrong in that belief. The numbers may be smaller but still usually top 50. What is more, we are now creatures of the video-age, and courtesy of stalwarts such as John Joyce and Renee Chester we have enjoyed Bing on screen as well as in sound.

Other events now fit around the Leeds gathering in the calendar, notably May-time get-togethers in Gateshead and London. The Annual visit to Yorkshire remains however - sometimes greeted by autumn sunshine, other times by winter fog. The format is different from that first afternoon in 1966, as, it has to be said, are most of the faces. The meetings remain, however, an informal get-together of

like-minded individuals, a gathering of kindred spirits.

So, here's to 1985 and 20 years. Long may the good times continue, and whilst it may not be Rio in Spring, Welcome to Mardi Gras!

Thus KEN CROSSLAND writes the prologue for our Leeds report. His article with others by Ken Barnes, Fred Reynolds, Michael Crampton and your Editor was in the special, glossy brochure produced for the Leeds dinner this year. The brochure also includes the menu, the programme &c. A few copies were left over at Leeds and are available from John Joyce, 21 Birchfield Gardens, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear NE9 7TJ at a cost of £1 post paid. They form an interesting item of Crosbyana and perhaps one day, a historic one!

THE DAY DAWNED BRIGHT

—AND stayed that way! Contrary to all expectations, Roundhay Park presented yet another sunny aspect to those who journeyed from near and far to be at the auspicious event on Septmber 22 last. Thanks to the wretched summer - and we speak in the calendar sense rather than the meteorological - hopes were not high but for that one day the weather relented to the extent that autumn was pushed back a few days. Thus we were greeted by a green parkland and not the usual multi-hued autumnal tints, rustling our way thro' a carpet of fallen leaves, to the Mansion Hotel.

Indeed, the sunny aspect can best be demonstrated by the fact that the assembled company could actually retire outdoors for the purpose of a group-picture - a splendid innovation. And that was not the only innovation, as you will read.

And Ken Crossland underestimated! No less than seventy were present. If known 'regulars' were quite unavoidably absent, and if the American SEE BING'S BRITAIN TOUR hadn't so sadly been abandoned, there is no doubt the numbers attending would have well exceeded one hundred.

No, the Americans were unable to attend en masse as had been hoped, but the US were represented for Renee Chester sprang a delightful surprise when she arrived with LARRY KINER and his son - Larry of course is the man behind SPOKANE records. Seems Larry was Renee's guest during his European visit. Larry was, as you would expect, warmly welcomed and turned out to be a friendly, diffident soul.

Australia too had a representative - three in fact, for KEITH DORMAN, treasurer of the Victorian Bing Crosby Society attended with his wife Roz and daughter Bronwen (there's lovely name, look you!) Keith too impressed with his quiet sincerity and his words of greeting went down very well with everyone. Keith in turn told us he was much impressed with the friendliness of the Leeds event. The Dormans were on a European too and scheduled things so that they could be with us - in company with KEITH PARKINSON (see address at front of magazine) who is the UK representative of the Victorian society.

Brave BARRY WHITTINGHAM made his usual appearance, still determined to get back on his feet again, with his devoted mother Charlotte, accompanying him. Their journey from Nottingham is no mean feat.

Well before the announced hour of 3pm the well-appointed dining-room of the Mansion presented another lively, chattering, throng of - as Ken Crossland has remarked - kindred spirits, gathered together, as it were, in the name of Bing Crosby. Records, books, tapes and other items of Crosbyana had been brought for sale, and with Bing's voice pervading all, it was a pleasant experience indeed.

> Michael, as always, opened the proceedings with his usual aplomb, welcoming all and especially the overseas visitors, touching on almost everything and - as usual again - leaving yours truly with little to add!

However, tribute had to be paid for Michael's achievement in so successfully keeping this splendid event going for 20 years - one man's great effort in admiration for, and memory of, Bing. It has been no mean achievement.

> It was a time, too, to recall some of the meetings; and of course, the one that is indelible in the memory of all there, was the event of 1977, just two days after Bing made that fatal trip to Spain. What a barrage of media men we met - radio, TV, newspapers. It was a rather wry situation that our meeting was shewn on television news bulletins that Sunday evening - yet none of us present ever saw it for, obviously, we were still at the Mansion - and it wasn't equipped with TV sets. At least, not in the banquetting hall. We were not really prepared to deal with that kind of media exposure!

I had to recall also the dear friends who had been 'regulars' but in the course of the 20 years had passed on. Against that melancholy line of thought was the happier one that new faces were continually making an appearance at this now traditional event.

As for Ralph Harding's experiences - well, Charlie Tupper must still vividly recall Ralph taking him down the wrong way on the M1.....

To the relief of your Editor, fish was 'out' this year and we returned to the more traditional fare of Roast Beef of olde England; the Fishermen of England (or their catches) took a back seat. And we returned once more to that quaint custom of having the Yorkshire pudding served by itself BEFORE the main meal! Naturally, the folk of the Broad Acres look askance when we southerners remark on this strangeritual!

Thereafter we had Bing and quizzes, chat, Bing...and video! Yes indeed, films have gone and we are in - again quoting Ken Crossland - the fideo age. That was our second innovation: thro' the kind offices of Renee Chester we enjoyed a screen of about five-feet by four! And the real delight was the work of JIM REILLY of Hereford. Films are enjoyable but they are time-consuming, especially as they dare not be cut off midway! Too discourteous.... Jim had done what many are busy doing: Made a full 3-hour video cassette of Bing singing the <u>songs</u> from his films ONLY. So that in effect we enjoyed countless 'visual' albums! Truly Bing's Hollywood !

And what interesting facts emerged as a result: For example, how many realise that Bing sang WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT MEETS THE COLD OF THE DAY on the Mack Sennett 'short' of that name - and that is the ONLY instance of Bing singing his immortal theme song on film? And what of those younger members who have listened to Bing singing on

records for many years - and at Leeds for the first time SAW him singing those songs with which they had become so familiar. Startling ? I found it so when they told me of this unique experience.

This video venture of JIM REILLY'S proved the ideal entertainment for the Leeds event and was much appreciated by all. The sheer if casual (seeming!) expertise of Bing performing his film songs is magical. Take YOU DON'T HAVE TO KNOW THE LANGUAGE with the also highly professional Andrews Sisters, as an example.

However, we're digressing. So passed the 20th consecutive Leeds meeting. It would be rash of some of us to say "Here's to the next 20!" Happily, there are those around who should ensure its continuation. I mean, when Michael held his first 'party' he was a carefree bachelor.....now, he has two grand sons! Coincidentally, Ken Crossland has had an identical experience! Oh, I suppose it must, in this permissive age, also be added that both have delightful wives!

As a final footnote, there was one year - bang in the middle of the 20 actually, 1975 - when we felt there was a real possibility that Bing himself might attend at Leeds! It was known that he was in Yorkshire somewhere - pictures had appeared in the papers showing him being introduced to cricket on the occasion of presenting a playing field to a Yorkshire boys' club. But it appears he had to leave for the States precipately and it wasn't until we received his message-tape for the dinner that it became known just how close he was! Among many other things in one of his lengthiest messages Bing said,....

> "I had a great time in Yorkshire - people were very kind - I stayed at Ripon - that's R-I-P-O-N - just off the freeway, or motorway I suppose you would call it...." Bing ended that message with:
>
> "I see the event is booked from 3pm to 10.30pm - that should give the pub a good beating! Take care! Love, Bing....."

ON THE FACING PAGE IS JOHN MARSHALL'S "VARIETY" In Memoriam notice on behalf of all of us. Again John is to be congratulated on organising this, appearing as it does in a show-business paper that is read all over the world. As you can see, it appeared in October.

> Some may have wondered at our somewhat cryptic comment: "If that makes you shudder - you had your chance!" Yet most who mentioned it knew the reason: we have a great detestation of Bing being labelled a "crooner". It is derisory, derogatory, demeaning and no tribute to Bing's magnificent baritone voice. Useless to deny, of course, that Bing <u>was</u> labelled as such simply because - until Bing - singers with dance bands had not enjoyed much popularity, being criticised as "whining", "nasal", "insipid", "spineless" and so on.... and as Bing started out as a "vocal refrainer" he was categorised as a "crooner". But its not an appellation we wish to perpetuate. That's all.

Member <u>Len Hawkings</u> of Bristol was good enough to send us a coloured photograph - seems an optician's in that city are using modelled "heads" of celebrities to show off their range of spectacles now that they are "freed" of monopoly-supply. Bing, shewn wearing a straw boater as well as the glasses, was for me utterly unrecognisable! They did nothing for him at all!

VARIETY

Wednesday, October 16, 1985

"THE VOICE THAT LAUNCHED A BILLION DREAMS -

UNFORGETTABLE **BING**

KING OF THE CROONERS" (Sheldon O'Connell)

3rd of MAY, 1903 TACOMA. *14th OCTOBER, 1977 MADRID.*

The International Crosby Circle. Crosby Chronicles. The New Bing Crosby Colour Photoclub. The Bing Crosby Historical Society (Tacoma). The Victorian Bing Crosby Society (Australia).

Mr. Leslie Crowther and some of the nicest, most warm hearted people in the world - Crosby fans, from all over. Still enjoying the best there is.

THE AFFLICTIONS OF A BINGAHOLIC

********** ====== BY DICK BAKER (TONBRIDGE)

From time to time we present stories such as this under the heading of ONE MAN'S BING ... this is a most interesting addition.....

Editor.

I can't claim that I was always conscious of Bing; or that I heard his songs at my mother's knee. She, dear soul, was too indoctrinated in that brand of music peculiar to certain of the English middle classes before the Second World War which was a mixture of items like 'The lost chord', Palm Court Orchestras and four-minute 'potted' versions of the popular classics. Anything 'below' this sonic cocktail was dubbed JAZZ! and therefore beneath any notice or value. It was not allowed in the house.

Somewhat later, when the radio was allowed to be used for purposes other than reception of the news, IN TOWN TONIGHT and SATURDAY NIGHT THEATRE, I was able to listen to occasional musical programmes - quietly - so I can recall listening to 'Dick Barton - Special Agent'! (not, of course, that that was musical, except in its dramatic introduction), in the years following the War. And I remember it was in the slot finally filled by the Archers.

I suppose that, inevitably, I must have heard a fair amount of Bing, tho' I don't think my level of interest in anything I heard was sufficiently high to allow individual performances to register. Certain songs did so register, to be collected later from the racks which are now labelled NOSTALGIA in the record shops. Only then did I discover the identity of the performers.

In the 50's I left home, got a job, and acquired my own record player. Musically, I have to admit, I was totally uninformed and ready to accept what was pushed my way. Involuntarily, my tastes were developed by friends in two totally different directions - classics and what is known as 'country and western' and I acquired many records, or as many as a limited budget would run to covering both of these areas.

Interests in music matured somewhat and with it a wish to have high quality equipment on which to play the records. I therefore started subscribing to a number of magazines including an American monthly called HI-FI STEREO REVIEW. In 1960 this carried a review of HOW THE WEST WAS WON which can only be described as a 'rave'. My interest was solely on account of the 'Western' element indicated. It was some months before it became available in this country but I duly placed my order for the stereo version. A week passed and I went to collect, only to find the mono version presented to me. Nothing doing and in a week I had the stereo albums.

AN AWAKENING

It was worth waiting for, just fitting my tastes of the time. It also covered an interesting span of pioneering American history and was attractive and varied. Additionally, the production, in a folder with pictures and a fair amount of background notes, was superb for the time - and it all cost £3.4.4d.

So, my interest in Bing was stimulated, though I thought of him as a 'Western' singer. Shortly afterwards I came across the first singalong record and the SAY ONE FOR ME soundtrack, at 32/2d and 17/6d respectively, the latter presumably marked down.

THEY WERE MOST DISAPPOINTING! NOT A BIT LIKE "HOW THE WEST WAS WON - tho' the singalong later grew on me.

So I forgot about Bing for a couple of years - then I came across a copy of the musical autobiography of Bing

Crosby in a shop which specialised in selling bankrupt stock, review' ers copies, etc. It was in the original stout green box (not the rather nasty flimsy yellow thing which contains the more recent MCA issue). Why I spent the £2.15s. asked for it in the light of my disappointment over SAY ONE FOR ME I can't imagine. Maybe I saw some vaguely Western sounding titles - I'M AN OLD COW HAND, Y'ALL COME &c - and associated them with HOW THE WEST WAS WON. Whatever the reason, I bought the set.

Initially, I was very upset. Interminably, it seemed, there was this character going on about his career and singing to a very 'samey' piano/bass accompaniment. Then things perked up. Halfway through there was the switch from re-creations to the originals, and I recognised them. Or at least, some of them. They were the songs I had absorbed into my subconscious over the years. I knew them, without identifying them with Bing. I had merely hummed or whistled them all thro' the 40's and 50's. There they were: YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE, TOO-RAL-LOO-RA-LOO-RA, NOW IS THE HOUR. I was hooked.

Over the next fifteen years I looked out Bing's records in the local shops, but perhaps the shops were deficient. HIGH SOCIETY, WHITE CHRISTMAS soundtrack, BING & LOUIS, FANCY MEETING YOU HERE, AROUND THE WORLD IN DIXIELAND etc. Perhaps I had acquired a couple of dozen records at the most by 1975. Then the flood started - not only of the new records made by Mr. Crosby 1975-77, but the reissues that came along - the Andrews Sisters double-album, etc. I had heard vaguely at some stage of the existence of some sort of Crosby fan club, and I had heard mention on the radio of someone called Leslie Gaylor in the Isle of Wight, who was recognised as an authority on Bing. But then came the day that I acquired BEAUTIFUL MEMORIES and there they were - names spelt out - might consider contacting them, sometime.

Then came Bing's last tour, altho' we didn't know it was to be the last, of course; Came the big day and the Baker family joined the throngs at the Palladium. We sat listening and cheering in turn, and even shouting ourselves silly at the end, admiring this great man, a little stiff of bearing, who had the whole audience in raptures.

A fortnight later he was dead....

After the immediate stunned reaction I realised there may be a danger that the supply of records from orthodox sources would dry up. I knew there were large numbers of records that I hadn't heard - and had a sample of some of them from the recordings I had kept of the BBC series (the first version) on the life of Bing, broadcast I think in 1974. They whetted the appetite - but where on earth could I get them?

A letter was duly sent to Leslie Gaylor, which produced a helpful and friendly reply both from him and from Reg Bristo, complete with a copy of the then latest issue of BING.

And what there was in it !

Reviews of records from companies I hadn't heard of; adverts from people selling records (and wanting them!). A note of something called an LPography and a mini-discography. Well, first things first. Let's find out what may be available before splashing out too far. A couple of posts later and Reg had produced both the LPography and the mini-discography.

Oh dear! On what was I embarking?

First, an analysis. All LPS owned were marked off in the LPography, titles similarly marked off in the discography and, so far as possible, titles on the LPs marked in the LP-ography.

That identified what I had and what I hadn't - and also highlighted a problem I have been cursing ever since. Though there were many records I hadn't got there were fairly

few LPs on which I hadn't got at least one title or two. Still, it was surprising to note that a significant number of the LPS which were totally virgin territory for me - except for snatches of some titles from the BBC series - actually seemed to be available from Mike Slipman, who was advertising in BING (What has happened to this valuable source of Bing material, incidentally?)

There followed a number of orders for Mike over the next year or so, largely of very early material - the Sunbeams, Jazzums, etc. Then CBS issued their three Embassy volumes and I acquired some RCA's - one from Holland, another from the USA. Suddenly I had more than doubled my collection of Bing records, though all the new acquisitions were for the few years 1926-1933, except for SEASONS, billed as the last recording, and the BBC offering THE FINAL CHAPTER which really WAS the last recording, albeit originally for a broadcast.

Now came the difficult - and expensive - part. To see what inroads I could make on the rest. I knew what I wanted - I had graded LPs in order of the proportion of unduplicated material on them. But where to get them? Many of them long since deleted. I had by now discovered two additional sources of supply, the HMV Shop in Oxford St. and Farringdon Records in Cheapside. Both carried large stocks of imports - tho' neither are now anything like as good as they were in this respect - and they occasionally came up trumps. For the rest I had to rely on acquisition of records secondhand thro' the columns of BING.

I have now reached the stage where I believe that there are only two 'commercial' records of which I have absolutely nothing - HIGH TOR and ON THE HAPPY SIDE. In saying this, however, I confess I am discounting a large number of records - like PEPE for instance - where Bing makes a fairly minor contribution.

For the rest, its duplication, duplication all the way. RCA's A LEGENDARY PERFORMER to get MACK THE KNIFE and THREE LITTLE WORDS is one fairly recent example.

So now I am the 'proud' possessor of six LPs with SOUTH AMERICA, TAKE IT AWAY, four with THE WAITER & THE PORTER & THE UPSTAIRS MAID etc., and the number with straight duplication is beyong belief.

And now there is Mr. McNicholas with his Chronological Crosby - wonderful! Great! But more duplication, but at last there shouldn't be any gaps. How long will it take? What price will it be? Will it ever be completed? Will there be a market for all the other records I may then wish to dispose of? Rhetorical questions at this stage, no doubt.

But the project hasn't yet got far enough for me to dispose of one single LP without losing something. Safety first dictates that I hang on.

In the meantime there are the radio shows. Now, why did I ignore all those early Spokanes in favour of the commercial recordings. How many haven't I got? I wonder where I can get them? And at WHAT price?

What can I do to alleviate my affliction? Is there a Bing's Anonymous that can help? Will I be cured if I am compelled to listen to WHITE CHRISTMAS continuously at 100 dbs for a week?

Editor: Lovely story with a nice touch of humour - but does Dick WANT to be cured? His path to Crosbyana was tortuous - but he's got there!

His article evokes many thoughts - but we'll let it stand on its own integral merits. Except to say that duplication is the bane of every Crosby collector. It would be interesting to know precisely which Bing track has made most appearances on LPs. When preparing the LPography for publication I got the distinct impression it was TOO-RAL-LOO-RAL-LOO-RAL. Job for some diligent researcher! Which reminds us: There is a new album out, Christmas, NOX 1 - in the SERIES 'THAT'S WHAT I CALL MUSIC' (hideous really); has 18 tracks, 17 by modern pop 'artists' - and WHITE CHRISTMAS by - Bing. Its an EMI label.

You'll not fail to see it for, like all pop monstrosities, it is widely displayed in record shops Strange company for Bing and not likely to appeal to us - there can't be many who haven't WHITE CHRISTMAS! And even for the sake of 'completeness' this album would take a bit of stomaching!

HERE'S ANOTHER PIECE FROM A SOMEWHAT ANGUISHED SOUL!
FINE CHRISTMAS ISSUE THIS IS TURNING OUT ----------

THE SEARCH IS THROUGH:

by RON PEARSON (Southend)

If my memory serves me right - I'm sure it does - it was in 1939 when I first heard Bing sing DEEP PURPLE. The song was very popular indeed at the time, and Bing's recording was aired many times over the next few years and it became a favourite of mine, especially (as many tunes do) for the nostalgic associations of those turbulent times. Unfortunately I couldn't afford to buy records in those early War years being then in my late 'teens.

When I did start buying records, they were mainly for my girl-friend (who later became my wife) and I freely admit my choice of records was invariably Crosby.

By this time, also, I was doing my 'bit' as they say in the Royal Navy. During my leave periods, we (Peggy and I) would search for 78s they being in very short supply - like most other things during the War. A little shop in Camden Town (London) comes to mind that we found on one occasion and subsequently made many visits to, usually coming away with a record or two - but never DEEP PURPLE.

Nevertheless, during the intervening years I have added considerably to my modest BC collection. DEEP PURPLE was, of course, deleted many years ago, undeterred I continued looking for this record. Always without any luck at all.

Then at the local Record Fair a little while back I ran into an ICC member and the outcome of our chat was an invite to see his collection. To my delight he had a copy of DEEP PURPLE that we listened to...the last time I heard this rendering was about forty years ago.

That very same evening, my daughter on holiday, phoned home to say she had heard Bing singing DEEP PURPLE at a dealers - and should she get it for me? What a question! What a coincidence! Needless to say I am now the owner. The disc is a bit scratchy but, considering its age, not too bad at all.

I don't wish to sound ungrateful now my search is through but the truth is, something has gone out of my life. Oh well, perhaps I can start looking for another recording !

Editor: Certainly - don't despair Ron. Why not start searching for a copy of the 12-inch 78 FACE THE MUSIC MEDLEY? You'll not find one (I think!) but the search will satisfy your need! Joking aside, we know how Ron feels; the ups and downs of a Crosby-record-collector's life is a wonderful story - or series of stories. I could tell some!

Ron's piece also reminds us of another aspect of the record scene that has changed in profound fashion. It was still possible to buy some of Bing's early 30's records in the late 50's for they remained in the Columbia and Brunswick catalogues all those years, indicating a continuing demand for them. That all went with the inception of micro-groove; and now, as we all know, unless you buy an album when you first spot it, it is likely to disappear for most albums nowadays are deleted within weeks!

Another point, as another footnote to Dick Baker's story above and the prevalence of duplications on albums. DEEP PURPLE has not suffered in this respect. In fact, its reissue has been very, very limited, confined to one EP and one 10" LP. It was recorded, incidentally, at the same time as the 1939 STARDUST.

Evening News, Saturday, August 3, 1985

BING CROSBY ... with "a nice sentimental little song."

Bing—and a melody that lingers

HITS THAT MADE HISTORY

By PAUL WALLACE

SITTING at his piano with its gadget which transposed his tunes out of the key of F — the only one in which he could play — 54-year-old Irving Berlin thumped out the melody of the number he had composed that morning for the movie "Holiday Inn."

The man who was to sing it, 38-year-old Bing Crosby, sat casually in a canvas chair in a corner of the Paramount set on that autumn day in 1942, and delivered his verdict.

"I don't think you need worry about this one, Irving," he said. It was the most masterly understatement in the history of pop. . . .

Composed in only a few hours, against a tight deadline, Berlin himself dismissed it as "quite a nice sentimental little song."

But the talents of the man who had written 3000 songs, and the singer who invented the way a pop song should be sung, combined to produce the best-selling disc of all time.

For, at the last count, "White Christmas" had broken all records — to sell an incredible 26 million copies.

As a young man, he had raved it up across America as vocalist with Paul Whiteman's jazz orchestra, and learned his phrasing and timing from the jazz greats who backed him.

"I just wanted to sing naturally," he once remembered. "I used to listen to classic singers forcing the volume and the high notes, and I couldn't understand a word they were saying.

"I just wanted to sing conversationally and easily, and let the people hear what I was saying."

By the time he was 50, he was a multi-millionaire with interests in racetracks, golf courses, oil wells, gold and uranium, real estate and baseball teams.

But none of Crosby's success came by accident. He recorded over 4000 songs in 25 years and, during one hectic week in New York, played eight shows a day.

But if Bing was lucky in his career — "White Christmas" was only put into the movie as an afterthought — he was unlucky in love.

"I can't show my feelings," he once admitted. "But that doesn't mean I haven't any. Its just something I've inherited. My mother was the same way."

Yet, by the summer of 1956, all that had changed. Crosby had fallen in love with Kathryn Grant, a Columbia Pictures starlet 30 years his junior, and from that moment his life was never the same again.

In September 1977, after taping a Christmas TV show in London with his family, Bing Crosby travelled to Spain for a golfing holiday. It was there that, one sunny afternoon, he died on the green after suffering a massive heart attack. .

"I can't think of a better way for a golfer who sings for a living to finish the round," said Kathryn, fighting back tears when she spoke to reporters only hours after hearing the news.

"AN EVENING WITH BING CROSBY" at the...

GATESHEAD RENDEZVOUS

Looking back to the Spring with John Marshall's REMBRANDT affair, the Maytime Gateshad - then Leeds, again closely followed by the North-East, 1985 has been quite a year for Crosby social events: PHIL MORGAN (Jesmond, Newcastle) reports ------

The Washington Suite in the Five Bridges Hotel in Gateshead was once more the scene for An Evening with Bing Crosby on Friday October 18th last, a gathering of kindred spirits, as Ken Crossland has described such events.

As always, organiser JOHN JOYCE opened the proceedings and extended his customary warm welcome to all present. In truth, the number attending this time was rather lower than usual with around 40 present. There were a number of reasons for this, apart from the general economic climate; in some cases illness played a part whilst others - the lucky ones! - were abroad tr ing to capture the sun after the dismal and scurvy summer we had here at home.

Introductions over, the highly satisfactory format for the evening developed as usual with plenty of music and conversation until the evening meal. This was thoroughly enjoyed by all, and the fare was:

1. Florida cocktail.
2. Steak & Kidney pie with roast potatoes and cauliflower mornay (? hope I have that right - Editor)
3. Mandarin cheesecake.
4. Coffee.

We had a quiz just before sitting down to the meal; it consisted of the verses of well-known Crosby songs. The winner was Michael Crampton who successfully identified the songs.

Two of the Mack Sennett 'shorts' were shewn. These never fail for they are of a length that doesn't consume too much time, yet give Bing in such splendid voice. We saw BILLBOARD GIRL and I SURRENDER, DEAR. These were very well received, especially as quite a number, including myself, were seeing them for the first time. And I was most impressed with AT YOUR COMMAND.

Later in the evening we again received a welcome visit from our friend at Metro Radio, who presents the MEMORIES programme and does much to promote the ICC in this area. He gave a short but interesting talk on his work and several guests gave him requests to play on the 'Bing Spot' he always includes in his broadcasts.

The evening ended around midnight and there was no doubt that everyone had had a great time -due, as always, to the efforts of John Joyce. Plans are already being made for our next meeting which will take place next May, but we have this winter to endure first! Details later. (Feature opposite: grateful acknowledgements to EDINBURGH EVENING NEWS.

And staying on social aspects, RENEE CHESTER'S plans to live in Spain are well advanced - well advanced indeed. She was a little disconsolate at Leeds, believing it might be the last she would attend. But, we're not accepting that - Spain isn't a million miles away!

As so many know, Renee's impact on Crosbyana in the last half-dozen years has been pretty considerable. One recalls her visits to the States for BCHS events, and especially the unveiling of the Gonzaga statue. And her activities in entertaining visiting American friends has been quite a feature, not to mention her efforts in providing albums (Spokane &c.) from the States, plus her video-copying facilities.

> The Chesters have bought a villa in Teneriffe as well as two studios for renting throughout the year. Mr. Chester has already taken up residence there while Renee is going backwards and forwards - London/Spain - disposing of property. She is returning to Spain in December for five weeks and returning to complete the tidying-up of furnishings &c. And Renee writes:

"I would be grateful if you would say in the December RING that I want to thank all the many friends I've made since joining the Circle. I hope to keep them and have every intention of staying in touch though it will not be quite the same. I definitely will not be at Leeds next year, but plan to attend in 1987.

Renee added as postscript: If anyone wants videos I must have their orders before the end of February to give me time before final departure for Tenerife. Meanwhile, if anyone is still wanting Spokanes she has two sets of 23 - 27 and some spares of BING IN GOLD, all at £8 each.

There will be many who will envy Renee, especially when it is considered how many hundreds of thousands of pounds that were virtually thrown away on holidays this year. Truly, it has been said, that there is nowhere lovelier than the British Isles. The dales of Yorkshire, the Lake District, the highlands and glens of Scotland the rugged beauty of so many parts of Wales, not to mention the more salubrious south with the 'Garden of England' and the even more salubrious south-west of Devon and Cornwall. Here in Wales, one only has to go a couple of miles to find breath-taking scenic beauty. Yet over all, there is one ingredient so often missing: sunshine. Its difficult to appreciate such beauty with a slatey grey sky and steady rain. I know at least two families that gave up in despair and returned home after three days of a scheduled fortnight's holiday this year - and they have booked early for Spain or Italy next year!

> Even so, homesickness is a very real thing. We've all known people home from years abroad in seemingly unending sunshine who stand out in the rain, face skywards, relishing the rain. Snag is, you soon get fed up with it! Doesn't know when to stop. And we are so pathetically grateful when we <u>do</u> get a nice, even a reasonable, summer. Its a national sympton.

Then you get those who say: 'I can't stick this hot weather. It wears me out!' Well, they didn't get worn out this year!

And to follow - its freezing cold in mid-November! And we have another four or five months to go before we <u>Might</u> - just Might hope for a glimmer of light...

Apart from all of which - its so EXPENSIVE keeping moderately warm these days. Perhaps it IS true that British weather makes us the stoical nation so many foreigners believe us to be....

AT YOUR REQUEST

recommends
TREVOR WAGSTAFFE
(Hornchurch)

I listened to Desmond Carrington's Radio-2 ALL TIME GREATS recently - in fact, I usually do - for this programme is reminiscent of the old FAMILY FAVOURITES in the good old days when Bing was always featured, often twice, on every programme. On this occasion they played songs IN THE COOL, COOL, OF THE EVENING, SWEET AND LOVELY, and A FINE ROMANCE, classics of Bing but not sung by him and partners though he was mentioned in connection with them. About every three weeks we may get a Bing song on this request programme even tho' no names are mentioned.

> What I suggest is that BING includes in each issue a regular reminder to members to send in radio requests, i.e. to Carrington's ALL-TIME GREATS, David Jacobs, ALAN DELL 'SOUNDS EASY', Nick Jackson STAR SOUND, Benny Green and others. These shows, even if not direct 'request' shows, are influenced by listeners' opinions and reflect this by playing them.

While Bing isn't likely to fade I feel we owe it to his memory to make sure his voice is heard regularly on these radio shows - we owe it to him for the immense pleasure his voice has brought over such a long time.

Editor: Splendid, and we heartily concur with Trevor; actually a lot of members are busily doing this, especially perhaps with local radio. We gather a lot of records were played via this medium around October 14 - STAN WHITE in Kettering may have set some kind of a record for he had five records played! Three were on Radio Northampton, and two in Ireland. How he managed the latter we're not sure.

There is another aspect; there is always the possibility that a particular record will pique interest and that long-awaited resurgence of interest in Bing's career will explode! It will one day, we are certain.

Make your letters cogent - give a good reason for wanting to hear the record, especially on various anniversaries (the wife's birthday!), births, weddings, and so on. As Trevor remarks, we owe it to Bing to make sure his flag is kept flying high...this is a forgetful world but only needs stimulating now and then. Make the programmes Trevor mentioned your particular targets.

There is, of course, no need to elaborate on the all-time champion - LESLIE GAYLOR - who not only requests the records but supplies 'em!

In the last issue we reported we had written to the BBC-TV thanking them for the long series of Crosby films we saw, and suggesting that the documentary THE HOLLYWOOD GREATS: BING CROSBY might be shewn again. We had the following reply:

> Thank you for your letter of 11th August which I have been asked to acknowledge, with apologies for the delay, owing to pressure of work.
>
> It was kind of you to write so appreciatively about the season of Bing Crosby films on BBC-2 and we are grateful for your interest, of course.

(Cont. over...

Your request for a repeat of the Bing Crosby programme included in the series THE HOLLYWOOD GREATS will certainly be kept in mind.

Yours sincerely,
SHEELAGH MULLINS (Miss)
Programme Correspondence Section.

And in connection with THE HOLLYWOOD GREATS we had a big surprise, though we shouldn't have, of course, with a little thought. We had a letter from Mr. Justice Francis Smith in New York asking if there was any way they in America could see this show?

NOW, WE DEALT WITH THIS SHOW VERY FULLY, NATURALLY, AND EXPRESSED OUR GENERAL DELIGHT WITH IT. IT NEVER OCCURRED TO US THAT OUR OVERSEAS MEMBERS WOULD BE NOT ONLY INTRIGUED BUT, TO AN EXTENT, EXASPERATED! THE REASON BEING THAT IT WAS SEEN ONLY HERE IN BRITAIN, OF COURSE.

Knowing that all countries sell their programmes all round the world, we felt there was a good chance that the show in question about Bing would be in this category. However, in view of the Justice's letter we wrote to Barry Norman on the subject, telling him of the great interest of our overseas members, especially in America, Canada, and Australia. In fact, I asked Barry Norman to confirm that the show was bing 'sold' to those countries. I then received the following, disappointing, reply from Barry:

Dear Reg,

Thank you very much for your letter.

I'm afraid the Crosby programme will not be shewn outside the UK because of the prohibitive cost of getting clearance for the showing of film clips in TV documentaries. I regret this as much as anyone.

Best wishes,
Yours sincerely,
BARRY NORMAN.

This letter is not immediately clear to me, but I imagine it means that the cost of getting permission to use film clips from the various companies is accompanied with a proviso that it is shewn only in Britain and NOT abroad?

Whatever the reason, it is obviously most disappointing that this excellent profile on Bing will not be seen around the world. Our good friend in New York has plenty of friends here who would gladly get him a copy but there is a snag here for the TV system used there is different from ours. This means a copy on our system would have to be 'converted', no easy matter. And that, of course, would then only satisfy one!

It is particularly unsatisfactory that the programme will not be seen in the land of Bing's birth. It might well have stirred the TV-moguls over there into some further action, and produced more such shows on Bing's unrivalled career.

That someone in Britain had the inspiration to make such an excellent programme might even have shamed them into action !

Reminiscing on Bing's records from all decades.....

DISC Crosby.

We learned of the use of Bing's recording of WHITE CHRISTMAS as the code signal to Americans in Vietnam that the time had come for the final evacuation from that torn country. On hearing it, they were to make for various assembly points to be picked up by helicopter. And we saw this acted out on TV, which meant the famed record was heard on television as early as November 20. The occasion was the play SAIGON: YEAR OF THE CAT, a true love story, it said.

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Sure enough, as the North Vietnamese pressed relentlessly on Saigon there were hectic scenes, and as the tension built up there came the so-familar record of Bing singing WHITE CHRISTMAS. This incident might well go into the 'Historic Crosby' category. Other entries might be Churchill's alleged injunction to Roosevelt to keep that 'Bing boy singing YOU ARE MY SUMSHINE during one of their war-time meetings; and the remark of one of the American generals at the ceremony of the signing of the surrender by the Japanese: "All we need now is Bing Crosby here to sing us a song or two!"

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The duets Gary performed with Bing at a tender age were terrific - SAM'S SONG and PLAY A SIMPLE MELODY in particular. They can only make one sadly reflect on what might have been....what COULD have been. Gary's ability as regards phrasing, timing, and indeed his voice showed what potential was there. Those two songs are, of course, the two 'big' ones yet it is a little surprising that two others, made 3 years later, didn't hit the jackpot, too, especially CALL OF THE SOUTH even if CORNBELT SYMPHONY was not on the same scale.

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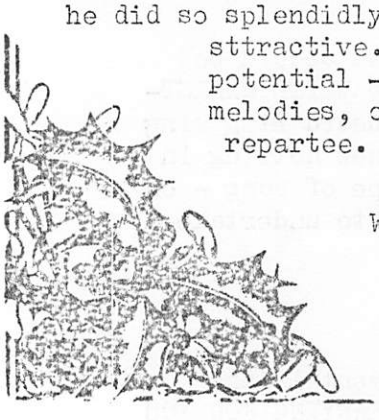
As you can see, neither of these two recordings have appeared on LP and, indeed, they are not only scarce but seldom heard anywhere. CALL OF THE SOUTH is particularly attractive because against Gary's singing of the song, Bing does a counter-melody singing the song he did so splendidly in MISSISSIPPI - SWANEE RIVER. Most sttractive. That is another aspect of Gary's potential - his ability to sing these counter-melodies, or against them, and keep up with the repartee.



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When you refledt that Gary was only 16 when SAM'S SONG/PLAY A SIMPLE were recorded its even more remarkable. It cannot be denied that Gary certainly had every chance.

Still, pursuing the "what might have been" line of thought is pretty futile; it all went wrong. PLAY A SIMPLE MELODY, an Irving Berlin composition, was - believe it or not! - a song Bing used to sing with of all people Groucho Marx. Not in public but at parties according to CALL ME LUCKY and it was these impromptu performances with the zany Groucho that gave Bing the idea to record it with Gary.

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Returning for a moment to CALL OF THE SOUTH, it was made at the end of December, 1953 and thus early Bing was showing his awareness of the changing racial situation. In singing SWANEE RIVER he sings:

"Oh, people, how my heart grows weary...."

instead of the original, perhaps traditional, "darkies". One recalls that Bing at Cockermouth in 1966 making a fishing film, commented it would be impossible to do, say, SHINE again in the way he did it with the Mills Brothers early in the 30's, for the same reason.

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Judy Garland was another all-time star who made duets with Bing - four in fact, in 1944/45. The best known probably is YA-TA-TA-TA; I must say I always get a chuckle at the start of this when Bing remarks: 'Love ya skimmer, Judy'! It appears 'skimmer' is a Crosbyism for the lady's hat. It looses off a torrent of feminine chatter - for that's what the song is all about: the inexhaustible chatter of an ebullient woman. Judy sang with Bing on the radio, too, quite a bit yet her style was never quite Bing's.

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A little strident, perhaps? No doubt Judy's fans will bridle! But its another reason why I'm rather relieved Bing never recorded with Ethel Merman! Again, however, there is a Judy Garland/Bing duet which I find highly attractive - and once more, it is probably the least known of the four. MINE is the record in question, and its another that has been sadly neglected in LP reissues. I believe its true to say that only on MCA's 'BING & CO' does it make its sole appearance.

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In this song Judy modulates her voice much better to Bing's and the result is a nice, tasteful, recording. The younger Judy had much more appeal than the powerful performer she later became. One remembers her youthful and memorable performance of YOU MADE ME LOVE you in which she so appealingly addressed herself to "Dear Mr. Gable" - that is, to young members, Clark Gable, Hollywood's No. 1 lover-man in the 1930's!

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Reminding ourselves that this is the Christmas issue we should no doubt be talking about seasonable recordings. Despite WHITE CHRISTMAS our mind goes back to the mid-30's when first we heard Bing sing SILENT NIGHT/ADESTE FIDELIS, an abiding memory. We knew nothing in those days about Bing being reluctant to sing this type of song - or carol - or about Jack Kapp and his persuasion of Bing to undertake the recording. All that came years and years later.

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We marvelled and treasured this startling new development in the Crosby career, young as it was. We'd heard JUST A'WEARYING FOR YOU and I LOVE YOU TRULY amid all the songs of the day and his film songs, and marvelled that Bing Crosby really was something different. We began to realise then, possibly, that this chap Bing could undertake

almost any song and lend it his special magic - a unique voice singing songs (and carols!) in a way we had never heard before. And the years rolled on and on and that special magic continued. Never changed. Yet when first we heard Bing sing SILENT NIGHT and ADESTE FIDELIS and sat spellbound - it was 50 years ago!

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That those of us who remember those days still very much enjoy listening to those records would seem to indicate that Crosbyana is no sentimental, even morbid, longing for days that are long gone. Rather a remarkable tribute to the enduring quality of the Crosby voice and personality. Indeed, we believe that the association of Crosby with Christmas in so many minds came about as a result of those mid-30's recordings; WHITE CHRISTMAS was seven years later, but that of course, with its relevant films, HOLIDAY INN and WHITE CHRISTMAS cemented the association.

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There were other reasons, too! One was that in those youthful, impecunious days, we expected parents and relatives to rally round and produce a Bing record as a Christmas present in much the way that albums are liable to be presented today - if they can be found! 2/6d in those days was no mean expenditure. It probably made a bigger hole in a week's budget than a whole album doe in today's!

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Another point about those days was that we were totally unaware, also, that Bing was making a special event - an extra special event - of Christmas on his radio shows. Except perhaps for those short-wave wireless enthusiasts who made strenuous efforts to tune into American radio stations. Those broadcasts heightened the Crosby-Christmas association for the American people; it was some time before we became aware of them.

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Whatever other attractions may be around there is always one album that HAS to be played in our household on Christmas morning - the one we don't seem to talk about much. This is CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD, the complete broadcast of December 24th 1955 which was beamed to English speaking people all round the world - English-speaking though of course, the broadcast called in France, England, Italy, Holland, Canada and various states of America itself.

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With Bing, the Vatican choir, 'joyeuse Noel!' from France, the little girl from the childrens' home in Kentucky reading her letter to Bing, there is a wonderfully graphic feeling of 'happening now' about the whole thing which never changes and is just as 'live' year after year. Orginally issued on Brunswick, of course, it was reissued by MCA; we've never heard how successful this albbm was as regards sales. All Christmas albums are seasonable, obviously, but this one more so as one feels it has to be played on Christmas Day only.

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With Bing's resonant, friendly, tones calling up all the various contributors with highly appropriate linking dialogue it ends with Bing's final - "Happy Christmas, everyone..." The sleeve notes end: 'We feel this is a recording that will have more and more meaning as time goes on....' Always true - profoundly so now that Bing has passed on.

'I sang a fair song in tune most of the time. I guess I had a good sense of comedy timing and could read the lines well. But I was a terrible actor. I kept playing the same part over and over'

In show business, where gaining and preserving status is often a life-consuming proposition, no Hollywood star achieved recognition as effortlessly, or maintained it as long, as Bing Crosby. Crosby chose *Call Me Lucky* as the title of his autobiography – but luck had nothing to do with it, not much anyway. He was a technician in perfect command of his resources. These included an inimitable baritone which was, in part, the result of some Prohibition rot-gut imbibed in his youth; an impeccable jazz phrasing which he eventually abandoned; and an uncanny understanding of the sense of intimacy that is the one requirement shared by cinema and radio. Crosby's great talent though was to conceal any trace of effort: everything seemed to come to the man as easily and casually as those deep, deep tones that were his trade mark.

He was born Harry Lillis Crosby in Tacoma, Washington, in 1903, of Irish Catholic lineage. He did not stay 'Harry' for long, however: his affection for a comic strip called 'The Bingsville Bugle' earned him his unique name when he was seven. At Gonzaga University he drifted from studying law to playing the drums and singing. He joined Al Rinker and in time their music attracted the attention of Paul Whiteman, who led the biggest jazz band of the Twenties. Whiteman recruited Crosby, Rinker and Harry Barris, dubbed them the Rhythm Boys and led them into the big time. He appears to have misunderstood the Crosby character. When Crosby started dating the up-and-coming starlet Dixie Lee, Whiteman warned her that if they ever married she would have to support Bing for life, for he was lazy and unambitious. They married, of course, and as Crosby went from success to success Dixie retired from the movies in the mid-Thirties to become a full-time wife and mother to their four boys. They remained married until her death in 1952.

Whiteman fired Crosby for his laziness after a few months, but by that time Bing had discovered films and vice versa. In the early sound and part-colour musical *King of Jazz* (1930), Crosby sings 'Music Has Charms' over the opening credits, while the Rhythm Boys appear throughout the picture providing the vocals to Whiteman's music. Crosby did not remain unemployed for long after the split from Whiteman: he joined Gus Arnheim's band as a vocalist and played the Cocoanut Grove in Los Angeles. It was then that Mack Sennett signed him for six two-reelers and in them Bing could be heard singing some of his most durable hits, including 'Just One More Chance', 'I Surrender, Dear' and 'When the Blue of the Night Meets the Gold of the Day'. But he remained in relative obscurity until the autumn of 1931 when CBS put him under contract and he became an overnight radio sensation.

He was back in films within a year, this time as a star in Paramount's *The Big Broadcast* (1932), which created the two standards 'Please' and 'Here Lies Love', both written by Leo Robin and Ralph Rainger, who were to supply Crosby with his best material for years to come. Robin was particularly adept at fitting a lyric around the Crosby personality.

Paramount placed Crosby under contract and kept him there for more than thirty years with a few sporadic loan-outs to other studios. By 1933 he was already so popular that Marion Davies requested him as her leading man for *Going Hollywood*. In this film, not only does Crosby appear unimpressed with the splendid resources of MGM, but he is inexplicably allowed to project a laid-back sexuality – especially in his rendition of 'Temptation' – that was to be subsequently phased out from his image. In *Going Hollywood* he also sang the lilting 'Beautiful Girl' by Nacio Herb Brown and Arthur Freed.

Crosby's Paramount musicals of the Thirties obeyed a strict formula: Bing pursues the leading lady with moderate ardour, plays straight man to the inevitable comedian and sings two or three songs that invariably salvage the whole manic enterprise. Thus *Here Is My Heart* (1934) is best remembered for 'June in January' and *She Loves Me Not* (1934) for 'Love in Bloom'; both hit songs were written by Robin and Rainger. If *Pennies From Heaven*, which Crosby made for Columbia in 1936, is remembered at all, it is due to the title song; the 1937 Best Song Oscar went to 'Sweet Leilani', sung by Bing in *Waikiki Wedding*.

An exception to the prevailing silliness of these films was *Anything Goes* (1936), the film version of Cole Porter's sophisticated Broadway hit. Here Crosby was teamed with Ethel Merman to deliver 'You're the Top', her bravura style blending nicely with his insouciance. Certain lyrics were laundered – when Merman sings 'I Get a Kick Out of You', for instance, the reference to cocaine becomes 'a castle in Spain' to preserve the rhyme. Nevertheless, the film often sizzles with innuendo – and it gave Crosby the classic 'Sailor Beware'.

Where could Crosby go from here? He was perfectly content to stay in a rut, making two pictures a year, introducing hits and accruing a weekly fortune from radio and records on top of his movie earnings. Then, in 1940, he was teamed in a haphazard comedy titled *Road to Singapore* with two other Paramount contract players, comedian Bob Hope and exotic Dorothy Lamour. Lacking a workable script, the two male leads took to improvising lines and comedy routines that touched on their private lives as well as making knowing references to the camera. Their on- and off-stage antics drove the film's producer Don Hartman crazy, but the unexpected success of *Road to Singapore* spawned six sequels (to *Zanzibar*, *Morocco*, *Utopia*, *Rio*, *Bali* and *Hong Kong*) and made Crosby, Hope and Lamour the screen's best-loved eternal triangle.

On April 7, 1941, Bing appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine, irrefutable proof that he had indeed arrived: cast a sleepy glance around him and conquered the box-office. His best work, however, was still ahead. In 1942 he starred with Fred Astaire in *Holiday Inn* and one song, plucked from the Irving Berlin score, became a wartime favourite because of its moving, simple melody and nostalgic lyrics. 'White Christmas' became Crosby's signature song and the best-selling record of all time.

It was becoming obvious that Crosby was more at ease, and that the fans preferred him, in unromantic parts. He usually extended his camaraderie to the leading lady in his films – Lamour proved to be a good sport in this respect – but one tends to remember, most fondly, his banter with Astaire, Hope, Frank Sinatra and others. The leading ladies in *Holiday Inn* were Marjorie Reynolds and Virginia Dale, but who remembers them?

In 1944 the director Leo McCarey gave Crosby the role of a young, brash unorthodox but devout Catholic priest in a semi-musical dramatic story, *Going My Way*. The film had no romantic interest – although Metropolitan opera star Risë Stevens was on hand to cast loving glances in Bing's direction – and Crosby played opposite Barry Fitzgerald, an Irish character actor formerly with the Abbey Theatre, who proved to be a redoubtable scene-stealer as a crotchety old padre in danger of losing his parish. *Going My Way* won five Oscars: one each for Crosby (Best Actor), Fitzgerald (Best Supporting Actor) and McCarey (Best Director), plus the Best Picture award and – for 'Swinging on a Star' – the Best Song award.

Crosby was never more endearing than as Father O'Malley, and although the film's unashamed sentimentality outraged non-believers and believers alike, it was often hilarious (McCarey, a Catholic himself, was also one of the best comedy directors in Hollywood). Its great success called for a sequel – and *The Bells of St Mary's* (1945) pitted Father O'Malley against Sister Benedict (Ingrid Bergman) and her bevy of gorgeous, lovable nuns.

Crosby was in great demand, but he only got mediocre films. Typically, he had followed his great success in *Going My Way* with an unprepossessing musical, *Here Come the Waves* (which at least gave the world 'Accentuate the Positive' by Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer), in 1944. There were two follow-ups to *Going My Way* after *The Bells of St Mary's*: in *Welcome Stranger* (1947) Crosby and Fitzgerald were reunited as country doctors and in *Top o' the Morning* (1949) they were policemen. One could imagine, with a shiver, an endless series of sequels in which the pair would play anything from G-men to bootleggers, but *Top o' the Morning* was mercifully their last film together.

In 1948 Crosby starred in Billy Wilder's off-beat *The Emperor Waltz*, a film which is opulent, colourful and satirical. As a plebeian phonograph salesman in the Austrian court, he woos and wins a haughty countess (Joan Fontaine), but not before her aristocratic poodle has been impregnated by his mongrel fox-terrier (which happened to be the spitting image of the His Master's Voice trade mark).

Other top-notch directors found Crosby responsive to direction – and a subtle practitioner of the throwaway ad-lib, the double take and the self-mocking understatement. Frank Capra directed him in *Riding High* (1950), a horse-racing story, and *Here Comes the Groom* (1951), in which Crosby played a reporter. Michael Curtiz directed him as an entertainer helping out an old army buddy in *White Christmas* (1954). By the early Fifties, the crooner label had virtually peeled off – partly because a popular young singer named Dean Martin was also under contract to Paramount and taking a lot of the singing roles – and Crosby was freer to tackle the more demanding parts that went against his old image. He was nominated for an Academy Award for his work in George Seaton's *The Country Girl* (1954), in which he was cast against the grain as an alcoholic has-been.

Crosby's retirement from the screen was gradual and graceful. After his last part, that of the drunken doctor in the remake of *Stagecoach* (1966), he made guest appearances on television and, in 1971, starred in *Dr Cook's Garden*, an ABC Movie of the Week, as a small-town doctor who practises euthanasia for the good of his fellow townsmen. Golf had always been the great passion of Crosby's life – and he was playing in Madrid when he collapsed and died in October 1977. He left a widow, actress Kathryn Grant whom he had married in 1957, and seven children.

As a singer, Crosby succeeded Rudy Vallee, who used the megaphone to captivate the flappers, and preceded Frank Sinatra, whose more sentimental style of crooning thrilled the bobbysoxers. Crosby's following was larger and more adult than either Vallee's or Sinatra's. His musicianship was proved when he breezed through the complex 'Ballad for Americans' in a record time of 45 minutes; the same difficult piece had taken Paul Robeson the best part of a recording day. Like Robeson, but in a different key, Crosby was a powerful American voice.

The term 'crooner' went out of fashion with the coming of Sinatra, Perry Como, Tony Bennett and others and Bing is now best remembered as the Old Groaner – a nickname which calls to mind the man's unique humour and charm and which made him irresistible to songwriters, film directors and millions of fans.

CARLOS CLARENS

MY BROTHER BING

A book entitled STOMP OFF -LET'S GO! is the story of the band that Bob Crosby led so successfully - orchestra and Bobcats - and which, in fact, he still does for special engagements even tho' the personnel is vastly changed. As might be expected, there are many references to Bing:

"Economically things were still restricted at home during the early 1930's and in order to pay for his sophomore fees Bob took a part-time job working as a picker for the same canning factory that employed his father One day, Bob's work at a place in the company's fields at a place appropriately called Opportunity was dramatically interrupted by the arrival of his father waving a telegram that had been sent by bandleader Anson Weeks. The cable contained an offer for Bob to sing with Weeks' band for a hundred dollars a week, a much better pay deal than the 25 cents an hour he was getting for picking cucumbers.

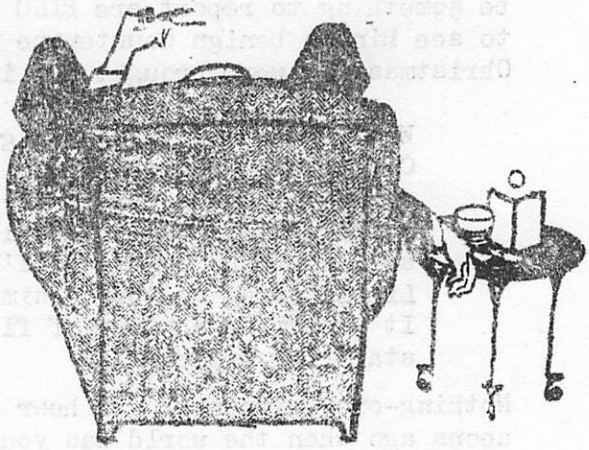
"Apparently, Bing and Anson Weeks had a few drinks together one night and Weeks asked Bing 'Are there any more at home like you?' Bing said 'Sure, my kid brother'. So Anson got the idea of featuring me with his band, but the problem was he hadn't heard me sing. It was arranged he listen to me over our local radio station KFPW, but the laugh was that when he came to tune in from San Francisco he couldn't pick up the station at that distance, so he signed me unheard.'

A FURTHER EXTRACT: "The problems of being Bing's brother ..d long been surmounted by the time of Bing's death in 1977. The brothers were not in close rapport during the last decade of Bing's life, there was no enmity, but Bob could never avoid feeling hurt when he learnt, quite often, that Bing had passed through San Diego without bothering to call. However, Bob was not at all distressed that Bing left him out of his will. 'Actually I respected him for that, it was his way of saying "You're independent, you can take care of yourself". Bob was less than pleased with the spate of lurid revelations about Bing that have been published over the past few years. 'Seems to me its dangerous to die if you're a celebrity' - and he was positively furious when Bing's widow, Kathryn, arranged an auction sale of her late husband's personal possessions.....Bob revered Bing's first wife, Dixie Lee but never enjoyed the same rapport with Bing's second wife....."The big thing lacking in Bing's later life (he said) was friends, not just guys with whom he had a joke, but close buddies, in something in his nature prevented him from expressing the affection that I'm sure he felt. He developed an image that was really a protective device against the world....."

"Members of the band were always pleased to see Bing Crosby, his presence added something to any evening. He always had a 'ready'gag' but despite the family association, the members of Bob's band never felt they knew Bing. They had recorded with him and shared various engagements, liked his jokes and his fooling around but never achieved any degree of closeness. Yank Lawson (a member of the band) says "It took years to get to the point where there was the normal give-and-take of conversation with Bing, but even when we did, I got the impression he was a guarded man. He did several gusy in the band various favours, but only of his own accord. If he'd been asked I'm sure that his reaction would have been different."(MORE ON PAGE 38 --

Editor: Most members will know that Bob Crosby was chosen to 'front' the well-known band of Ben Pollack when the latter decided to purchase his own nightclub and disband. Although a non-musician, Bob with his pleasant personality, knowledge of jazz and swing plus his voice, made a very big success of the job. And the band, naturally, was delighted - and thankful.

BING track EVENTS



THE INDUSTRY HE ENRICHED FORGETS
THE WORLD HE ENRICHED, REMEMBERS

BING

On My Mind

White Christmas
by
Irving Berlin

Ever since Bing Crosby sat down at the piano in the 1942 film "Holiday Inn," and introduced this immortal song, Americans have associated Christmas with snow, Crosby and Irving Berlin's "White Christmas."

"I'm dreaming of a White Christmas
Just like the ones I used to know
Where the treetops glisten
and children listen
To hear sleigh bells in the snow"

The above comes from a splendid little booklet entitled CLASSIC STORIES OF CHRISTMAS, published in America. Bing is in good company too for the book contains potted versions of Dickens' A CHRISTMAS CAROL and O'Henry's GIFT OF THE MAGI, and AMAHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS among others.

We must apologise that Bing and Rosie (for it is they!) come out in silhouette! Picture was just too dark for our system. Acknowledgements to the GUINESS BOOK OF RECORDS

And except for the perennial reissue of WHITE CHRISTMAS by EMI-owned MUSIC FOR PLEASURE, John Marshall's apt comment of last year above right

From the Guinness Book of World Records
BIGGEST SELLING RECORD
"White Christmas," penned by Irving Berlin, has sold more copies than any other recording in history — 125 million. Bing Crosby's version, recorded in 1942, has sold 25 million copies and recordings by other artists have sold 100 million. Bing is seen here with Rosemary Clooney, his costar in the movie "White Christmas."

(Cont. over.....

remains singularly pertinent for there are no reissues to report tho' as we are necessarily starting this feature rather early there may yet be something to report ere BING is posted. And of course, it was good to see Bing's benign countenace once more filling the browsers as the Christmas LPs were brought out in the shops.

> Woolworths always make a good show of Bing's WHITE CHRISTMAS - and this year the one-time 'nothing-over-sixpence' store sprang another big surprise. As many members will have noted with relish, they were actually selling BELLS OF ST. MARY'S on video-cassette for £6.99! Little more, as they claimed, than a blank cassette. It was among a range of films being offered at this startling price.

Nothing-over-sixpence? I hear the young members querying - yes, aeons ago when the world was young Woolworths was always known as the store which sold nothing over that now obsolete coin. A tanner, to be colloquial, 2½p. Hardly seems possible what you could buy for that sum, too - including gramophone records, tho' there was never a Bing among them! Mostly eight-or-nine-inch records with popular hits of the day, yet such are the vagaries of public taste (even the minority ones) some of those very tanner records have been reissued on LP albums of vintage dance music! Howevdr, we are in danger of going non-Bing and that just will not do. Especially as we are about to thread our way thro' what may be a veritable minefield !

NOT YET ON LP

Originally this was going to be entitled NEVER ON LP but we decided to take the optimistic view and use as shewn. We bemoan the lack of Crosby albums - your Editor as guilty as anyone - yet the astonishing truth emerges that Crosby admirers, apart ffom being the most discerning, are probably the luckiest in the number of recordings that have been reissued on album! It is certain that no other contemporary artist recorded as many songs as Bing during his remarkable 50-year-plus career - and it is equally certain that no other artist has had such a high proportion of his recordings reissued in the modern album form.

> We're certain this will come as a big surprise, if not shock, to many members but it is true. If we take BING - JUST FOR THE RECORD, which is as accurate as any discography that has ever been compiled, Bing made 2,321 recordings according to the running-total. This number does, however, include varying 'takes' and songs he recorded more than once; so far we don't know of any research that has revealed precisely how many songs Bing in fact recorded. Even so, if we just say around 2,000 - how many have NOT appeared on LP? Who would hazard a guess?

Well, the truth is - just 66!

So those of us who had nurtured the belief that there were hundreds of Crosby recordings yet to be issued on long-playing albums have to revise our opinions in no uncertain fashion! This surprisingly low figure of sixty-six emerges as the result of research by FRANK WILGAUS, of Cleethorpes, with a degree of assistance from MICHAEL CRAMPTON.

But - and we hasten to add this but for it is a big one: the figure goes up considerably if the tracks issued on private, independent, Limited Edition or even 'pirate' labels are <u>not</u> counted as pukka issues. The total in fact rises to 178.

Whether or not the tracks on these independent/private LPS should be regarded as commercial issues, or reissues, is a problem that exercises the minds of all discographers these days - as we've many times mentioned here. By 'pukka' reissues we mean those issued by Decca (and its various labels like London, Coral, &c.), EMI, MCA. Philips, MGM, Warner Bros., that is, the companies which recorded or perhaps commissioned the recordings in the first place, and first marketed them. These, in the main, were generally available to most members.

The 'privates' which include such as Spokane, Totem, Biograph, Sunbeam, Pelican, Broadway, etc. etc. with Australian Crosbyana issues are not generally, or easily available to most members. And admittedly, a lot of these contained radio-only material. Even so, the discrepancy of 112 tracks mentioned above, have appeared on these more obscure labels.

AN IMPORTANT FEATURE - AND AN EXCEPTION - ARE THE STARTLING JAPANESE REISSUES, under the MCA banner, for these have included tracks never before on LP, private OR commercial.

We referred earlier on to this subject being akin to walking through a mine-field! This feature will be scrutinised by hawk-eyed discographers all over the world and we know they will not be backward in correcting us - where necessary. That doesn't deter us in the least for it will lead ultimately to an accurate listing of what has never been issued on LP out of Bing's enormous output.

The higher figure of 178 is pretty startling - but 66 surely is an eye-opener!

So for everyone to browse over, ponder over, perhaps even worry over, here are the songs not yet on PUKKA LPs. We have included both listings for the sake of convenience. Those in CAPITAL letters are the 66 not issued on LP in any form; those in normal type have been issued on private/independent labels:

(A)

A bluebird singing in my heart 1947
A fella with an umbrella. 1947
A FRIEND OF YOURS 1944
A marshmallow world. 1950
A PERFECT DAY 1953
A quiet girl 1953
A weaver of dreams 1951
Adeste Fidelis (DLA 256) 1935
Ain't ddin' bad doin' nothing 1947
All of my life 1945
ANGEL BELLS 1955
ANY TOWN IS PARIS WHEN YOU'RE (YOUNG 1951

(B)

BEBOP SPOKEN HERE 1949
BLUE SHADOWS & WHITE GARDENIAS 1942

(C)

CALL OF THE SOUTH 1953
CAN I FORGET YOU? 1937
Can't get Indiana off my mind 1940
Chapel in the valley 1940
Church bells 1958
Conchita Marquita Lopez 1942
CONNECTICUT 1945
CORNBELT SYMPHONY 1953
Cynthia 1939

(D)

Dancing shadows 1928
Dear friend 1944
Devil may care 1940
Don't let a good thing get away (unissued?) 1967

(E)

Early American '45/50
Evening star 1928
EVERYWHERE YOU GO 1949

(F)

Far from home 1966
Farewell 1955
For love alone 1936
From Monday on(Trumbauer) 1928

(G)

GETTING TO KNOW YOU 1951
Got the moon in my pocket 1942
Gotta get me somebody to love 1946
Grieving 1928

(H)

Haunted heart 1947
Hello mom 1942
Helpless 1949

HOME ON THE RANGE (DLA 1153) 1938
Hot time in the town of Berlin 1944
How green was my valley 1966
HOW IT LIES 1949
Humpty dumpty heart 1941

(I)
I Cross my fingers 1950
I didn't slip,I wasn't pushed 1950
I do, do, do, like you 1947
I LOVE MY BABY 1952
I WILL REMEMBER YOU 1950
I'd like to hitch a ride with Santa Claus 1950
Ida I do 1947
If I loved you 1945/47
In the mission by the sea 1937
Iowa 1944
It had to be you 1952
Its more fun than a picnic 1949

(J)
Jim, Johnny and Jonas 1955
Just a kid named Joe 1938
Just a little lovin' 1952
Just a'wearying for you (US Decca DL 503?) 1945
Just one word of consolation 1936
Just plain lonesome 1942

(K)
KATRINA 1947
KOKOMO INDIANA 1947

(L)
La golondrina 1928
La Paloma 1928
Learn to croon (B 779A) 1933
Let's tie the old forget-me-not 1938
Let's waltz for old times' sake 1937
LITTLE JACK FROST GET LOST 1952
Little pal 1929
Lone star trail 1940
Lonesome in the moonlight 1928
Looks like a cold,cold winter 1950

(M)
MANDY IS TWO (DLA 2841A) 1942
Make believe you're glad 1949
March of the musketeers 1928
Maria Bonita 1951
MAY THE GOOD LORD BLESS AND KEEP YOU 1950
Maybe I'm wrong again 1934
ME AND THE MOON 1936
Memories 1947
Missouri waltz 1927
MOONLIGHT ON A WHITE PICKET FENCE 1944
MORE AND MORE 1944
MORE I CANNOT WISH YOU 1951
My blue heaven 1927
MY HEART GOES CRAZY 1946
My kinda love (Dorsey Bros) 1929

(N)
Neighbours in the sky 1939
Never in a million years 1937
Noel 1928

(O)
Oh baby mine (I get so lonely) 1954
OH BUT I DO 1946
OH TELL ME WHY 1954
Old soldiers never die 1951
Ooh, maybe its you 1927

(P)
Pale moon 1940
PASS THAT PEACE PIPE 1947
Poor butterfly 1928
POPPA SANTA CLAUS 1950

(R)
Robins and roses 1936
Rosaleen 1952
ROSE OF SANTA ROSA 1946

(S)
Save your sorrow for to-morrow 1945
Sentimental and melancholy 1937
SENTIMENTAL MUSIC 1951
SEVEN NIGHTS A WEEK 1957
Shepherd serenade 1941
SILENT NIGHT (V.Young) 1935
Silver moon 1951
SLEIGHBELL SERENADE 1952
Sleighride in July 1944
SLEIGHRIDE 1952
SO MUCH IN LOVE 1946
So tall a tree 1950
SO WOULD I 1946
SOMETHING WONDERFUL 1951
SORRY 1949
Stabat Mater 1935
Step to the rear 1967
Straight down the middle 1957
STRANGE MUSIC 1944
SUSPENSE 1947
SWINGING DOWN THE LANE 1947

(T)
Tara-ta-lara 1948
That Christmas feeling 1950
THAT LITTLE DREAM GOT NO-WHERE 1945
That saxophone waltz 1927
THAT'S HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU 1946
The bombardier song 1942
The eagle and me(W.72578A) 1944
THE FIRST SNOWFALL 1955
The friendly islands 1950
The girl friend 1951
The girl with the pigtails in her hair 1940
THE LAMPLIGHTER'S SERENADE 1942
The loneliness of evening 1951
The lonesome road 1938
THE MOON CAME UP WITH A GREAT IDEA LAST NIGHT 1952

The moon was yellow	1934
The next time it happens	1955
THE ROAD TO MOROCCO (L3030)	1944
The old chaperone	1947
The river	1954
The star-spangled banner (reading US Decca DL 9072?)	1946
THERE'S MUSIC IN YOU	1953
THIS COULD BE FOR EVER	1946
This is the time to fall in love	1950
Till the end of the world	1952
Tomorrow's my lucky day	1957
TOO-RA-LOO-RA-LOO-RA	1944
Walk me by the river	1953
WE ALL HAVE A SONG IN OUR HEARTS	1951
WHAT AM I GONNA DO ABOUT YOU?	1947
What do we do with the world?	1967
What is love?	1937
What will I tell my heart?	1937
When mother nature sings her lullaby	1938
WHEN THE ORGAN PLAYED 'O PROMISE ME	1937
WHISTLER'S MOTHER-IN-LAW (DLA 2599A)	1941
White Christmas (DLA 3009)	1942
Whose dream are you?	1945
WHY CAN'T YOU BEHAVE?	1949
Why do I like you?	1945
WITH THIS RING I THEE WED	1951
WITHOUT A WORD OF WARNING	1951
YOU DO	1947
You gotta show me (US Decca DL5085)	1951
You're wonderful	1941
YOUR SOCKS DON'T MATCH (L3479A)	1944
YOU'VE GOT ME WHERE YOU WANT ME	1944

We won't need to wait for the first corrections! In the above the following titles SHOULD have been in CAPITAL LETTERS, viz:

ADESTE FIDELIS
ALL MY LIFE
LOOKS LIKE A COLD, COLD, WINTER.

Remember, we are maintaining that those so printed have not yet been issued on LP, commercial or independent. The number that have appeared on the latter (independent) shows what efforts have been made to bridge the gaps left by Decca, EMI, RCA etc. etc.

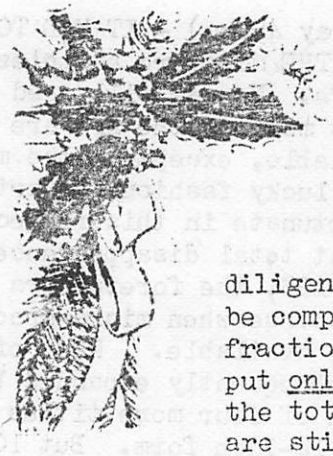
NOTES: Some of the titles may have appeared on EPs (Extended play 45rpm) - IT HAD TO BE YOU, ME AND THE MOON are examples) - but no on LPs. No one will need telling that most of the LPs are no longer available, except in the most astonishing lucky fashion! Particularly unfortunate in this respect is the almost total disappearance of the 10-inch LPS, the forerunners of the 12" of course when micro-groove first became available. Many of them were subsequently expanded by the addition of four more titles and reissued in 12-inch form. But 10" albums such as BING CROSBY SINGS JEROME KERN, COLE PORTER, STARDUST, LE BING and others were never satisfactorily reissued.

Its a startling thought that the LP has now been with us for more than 30 years! Its even more devastating to realise we have members who are young enough not to KNOW the pre-LP days. It was certainly a tremendous invention, enabling Bing's records to be acquired at twelve a time - instead of the hitherto laborious, not to say expensive, build-up of a couple of 78s at a time.

It will be appreciated, too, that the 1928 tracks in our listing have, or will soon, all be available on the incredible CHRONOLOGICAL BING CROSBY series.

Accompsnying his lists, FRANK WILGAUS wrote:

> Hope you find room for this listing so that expert eyes may be cast over them and perhaps point out that some HAVE been issued - and if so, where? There are several cases where two takes were made on different dates and I have been unable to define which take is on the appropriate LP - TOO-RA-LOO-RAL-LOO-RAL is a case in point and maybe the top lads can sort those out for us!
>
> A QUIET GIRL is one of my favourites; I'm sure Bing must have loved it too from the way he sang it, both on record and on the GEC shows. Its incomprehensible to me that so many of the snngs,lovely tracks from 1934 to 1942,have been missed out - CAN I FORGET YOU, for instance, a supreme example of popular singing at its



best. I wish I could get the job of compiling a few LPs!

We're extremely grateful to FRANK WILGAUS and to Michael Crampton for, as it were, setting the ball rolling on this subject and for their obviously diligent researching. True, some attractive albums could be compiled - but we still feel it rather startling that fractionally under 3 per cent of Bing's vast record output only has not appeared on LP records. Even if we take the total as augmented by the non-commercial issues, there are still only less than 10 per cent unissued - a remarkable state of affairs when you consider the total of 2321 recordings.

And in deference to those who read BING with the utmost assiduity, we must - before leaving the subject - admit that our figure of 66 (see above) turns out in the listing to be 65. This is due to the fact that there is some doubt as to which versions of SILENT NIGHT have appeared on LP.

And our earlier caution has been rewarded for we can now turn our attention to a real TRACK EVENT:

THE CHRONOLOGICAL BING CROSBY - VOL 4 1928

NO. JZ - 4

JONZO RECORDS: PO BOX 212, HARROW, MIDD'X HA3 7LD. PRICE: £5.00 but see below.

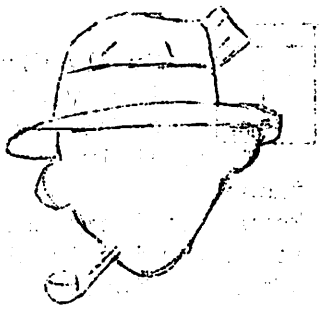
The fourth album in this brave series is now available, if not locally, from the address above. Members will know it is the avowed intention of the producer and his collaborators to issue in this CHRONOLOGICAL series every record Bing ever made. Additionally, every alternate 'take' is to be included. It is a project to truly boggle the mind; we will refrain from going into statistics and time-scale but it will be patently obvious to all that it is a very, very, long-term project indeed. The last thing we would want to do is to give even a hint of dubiety, much less discourage the gallant people behind the plan.

There are, of course, many who are anxiously awaiting the time when they can get albums containing the songs listed above in our previous feature; and to have on glossy, new, albums songs like THINE ALONE, FOR LOVE ALONE, MAYBE I'M WRONG AGAIN, CAN I FORGET YOU? etc. etc. But in a chronological series, the groundwork has to be done, and in the circumstances, it means Bing's first and earliest efforts have to be issued first.

The result is, and has been in the previous three albums (JZ 1-2-3) that we hear Bing with the Rhythm Boys, in 'choruses' with the Whiteman orchestra, as well as soloist with that (and other) outfits. And with the various 'takes' we have, on Volume 4, the extremely odd situation whereby there are sixteen full tracks involving only eight songs!

This issue is somewhat belated according to the producer's own schedule but is partially explained by the fact that an unissued 'take' of I'M WINGIN' HOME was discovered when the album was in fact ready, with the sleeve printed, but a 'stop press' action was taken so that it could be included.

Full details are given overleaf : ------ They are highly comprehensive:



SIDE 1: PAUL WHITEMAN'S RHYTHM BOYS.

Harry Barris (piano)
New York, March 1 1928
BVE 43121-1 What price lyrics? Vi 24349
BVE 43121-3 What price lyrics? Vi 21302

PAUL WHITEMAN & HIS ORCHESTRA:

New York, March 12, 1928
BVE 43140-2 I'm wingin' home * Vi 21365
BVE 43140-3 I'm wingin' home * ?

New York, March 14, 1928
CVE 43143-3 Metropolis - Part 3 Test
CVE 43143-4 Metropolis - Part 3 Vi 35934

New York, March 15, 1928
BVE 43145-1 Lovable ** HMV B5509

New York, March 16 1928
BVE 43148-1 March of the Musketeers * Vi 21315

SIDE 2:

New York, April 21, 1928
BVE 43660-3 I'm afraid of you ** Vi 27685
BVE 43660-4 I'm afraid of you ** Vi 21389

New York, April 22, 1928
BVE 43662-1 My Pet * Vi 27686
BVE 43662-2 My Pet Vi 21389
BVE 43662-3 My Pet Test
BVE 43663-1 It was the dawn of love* Test
BVE 43662-2 It was the dawn of love* Vi 21453
BVE 43663-3 It was the dawn of love* Test

* indicates Bing takes lead, but has vocal 'assistance'.
** indicates Bing sings solo.
No asterisks indicates Bing's contribution tho' discernible, is indeterminate. This is particularly so in METROPOLIS.

Bing is prominent, of course, in the Rhythm Boys tracks.

The sleeve contains also the personnel of the illustrious Whiteman orchestra.

My wife happened to be listening when this album was on the turntable; she looked up and said: "Something wrong with this record - they keep playing the same tune!" A fairly natural reaction from the normal, casual, listener perhaps. With two or even three versions of the same song the misconception is entirely understandable. This is a collection most certainly for the dedicated, relentless, pursuer of Bing's historic career.

> I must confess that I am not a 'take' man - if the phrase is permissible! I've always appreciated that in the making of a gramophone record it was almost certain the song was played more than once - definitely in 1928 and up until the days when tape was available and mistakes could be cut out, and indeed, different 'takes' could be spliced together to make an 'acceptable' recording. It follows - to me - that there will be minor differences. If I have Bing singing the song, that does for me. But, I do understand the diligence, tenacity, and quest for EVERYTHING Bing did by those who have that particular 'bug'. Such things are meat and drink to them. I would have no wish to even attempt to dampen their ardour!

It is necessary, however, to understand and appreciate this aspect, particularly when listening to these Chronological albums. It usually means extremely careful listening is necessary to detect differences in different takes - even to the extent of playing the two concurrently, and with a listening collaborator! That's a bug for you !

The Crosby Circle, of course, abounds with members who will lose no time in adding this further instalment of an unique series to their collection. Equally, there are those for whom this era of the Crosby saga is un known territory and, to be frank, they are not too enthusiastic about it, especially when it is often difficult to detect Bing's presence - and are dubious about his singing even when he is solo! As we have many times pointed out, this so often depends on the precise period when they became aware of the Crosby magic. Some as late as the 70's, be it noted!

They should not turn away from the material thus made available - for it is unlikely to happen again. This is the grass-roots Bing, singing away whenever he got the opportunity and when neither he nor possibly those around him, could have dreamed that a few short years more and Bing Crosby would be safely installed as the greatest vocal innovator and stylist of the 20th century. And, with an unique voice of rare beauty and quality to go with that pioneering baptism.

There is another aspect to which attention might well be drawn. It has been remarked earlier tha there are members who have grown up in the LP age and do not know the era of 78 records. It follows that, because of their age, they are not familiar with what has now been recognised as "the golden era" of popular music - the age of the great dance bands. True a lot of them went under this general appellation even if they mainly concentrated on stage and concert work, and seldom played for dancing.

The producers of this album are particularly anxious for us to point out that the track WHAT PRICE LYRICS-3 contains a fault which is inherent in the processing of the original 78 - both Victor and HMV - so that when this track is played it sounds as if a worn 78 was used in the mastering, whereas in fact it was a virtually 'new' condition Victor 78. Several such Victors were studied - all from different stampers and it was found they all suffered in the same way. Nothing that the technician JOHN R.T. DAVIES could do would overcome the problem and we had, therefore, no choice but to use the best of the Victors at our disposal. This fault on take 3 may have been the reason that take 1 was issued in April/May of 1933. Take 1 plays perfectly.

Our reviewer says: I could detect no dramatic lowering of the overall high standard of the tracks which is, as with the preceding three volumes, quite remarkable in its high quality.

And PAUL WHITEMAN'S orchestra was, to quote Bing himself, a Mount Everest among bandleaders. His name and his orchestra have become legendary and Bing certainly realised that joining Whiteman was perhaps the biggest slice of luck (Bing always spoke like that, of course!) he ever encountered.

These records, therefore, apart from the historic Crosby participation, are very valuable in the way they demonstrate just what a "big band" was, and could do, in the music line. It is fascinating to hear how the arrangers - and they had a tremendous say in the style and indeed the reputation of an orchestra - used their skill in allocating a score - using the brass, the reeds, the strings and certainly the rhythm to complement each other, the switching of the melody and harmonic lines from one section to another and, in the process, producing a grand flowing yet rhythmic sound. The arranger took note of the way a singer performed, his best 'key' and tailored their score to fit him in, with obligatos and codas. Many arrangements were minor masterpieces and deserve to be studied on those lines alone. And with the Whiteman orchestra, one had all that - and Bing!

Whiteman could, and did, employ the best musicians around: so many have become legendary whether they played fiddle (Joe Venuti), saxophone (Trumbauer), brass (Jack Teagarden, Bix Beiderbecke), the Dorsey Bros., and so many others.

And although the Whiteman orchestra came under the generic term of "dance band" it was far, far more. It did undertake residential hotel stints

and adjusted accordingly, playing music for dancing. It mainly, however specialised in spectacular stage and concert performances, playing a repertoire which included the pioneering 'symphonic jazz' of Gershwin, RHAPSODY IN BLUE and the 1812 Overture. This alb n demonstrates the orchestra in both capacities - dance-band foxtrots such as LOVABLE, I'M AFRAID OF YOU, and the 'descriptive' orchestral aspect in METROPOLIS, a composition to convey the musical impression of a mighty city. You may re .ll that Bing got into hot water by bashing away away at the chimes in the mighty finale of the 1812!

> The sleeve maintains the quality presentation of the three previous volumes; is in a light greyish-beige, with pictures of the 1928 (perhaps earlier) Bing, by himself and with his two colleagues of the time, Al Rinker and Harry Barris. Indeed, the portait on the front must be one of the earliest show-business photos of Bing where he looks not only youthful, but positively boyish! Notes are by that redoubtale researcher COLIN PUGH who highlights the significance of the various tracks so that there is no need for us to do so here.

The Rhythm Boys' numbers demonstrate the joie-de-vivre of three young men who had broken into show-business and were clearly loving it. The numbers like LOVABLE (which is NOT the same song Bing sang so grandly in the Mack Sennett 'short'), I'M AFRAID OF YOU and I'M WINGIN' HOME demonstrate Bing's style of the time - the style that was making people look up and say "This xhpp is something different!" May we say here that all three 'takes' of MY PET should have one asterisk against them, not only the first 'take'.

> A word about the price: The basic price of the album is £5.00 but VAT adds 98p, postage and packing (if you cannot get the album locally) brings the price up to £7.45p.

Oh, yes! MARCH OF THE MUSKETEERS, the composition of RudolphFriml, desmkmstrates so early Bing's ability to take on a kind of "light operetta' song - and perform it in style.

We are given to understand that VOLUME 5 of this series is very likely to become available early in December. Any further news about this will appear elsewhere in this issue should it eventuate.

NOW - its three cheers for a firm we don't think we've heard of before:

BING CROSBY: THE RADIO YEARS, VOLUME I — NCP 704

Price: £3.25p

Here's an oasis,for a brand-new album HAS appeared - and if it appeared in South Wales its a fair bet its being seen everywhere! Subtitles to the above are: WITH JUDY GARLAND, CONNEE BOSWELL, AND GEORGE BURNS, John Scott Trotter and his Orchestra and The Dixieland Boys. All twelve tracks are post-War II radio items:

Side 1:
Singing in the rain (17.2.54)
Young at heart (103.54)
Everybody loves my baby (8.11.53)
Where is your heart?(Song from 'Moulin Rouge)(22.11.53)
For me and my girl (duet with Judy Garland)(18.5.52)
You go to my head (13.5.53)

Side 2:
That's A'Plenty (duet with Connee Boswell (6.9.52)
Stranger in Paradise (3.1.54)
Changing Partners (24.2.53)
Lady of Spain (1.4.53)
Answer me, my love (24.2.54)
It might as well be spring (duet with George Burns)(14.1.48)

The firm in question is Precision Records & Tapes Ltd., 105 Bond Rd., Mitcham, Surrey. We strongly suspect, however, that the album is of American origin as the dates on the sleeve are in the Transatlantic style, e.g. month, day, year instead of day, month, year as here. The sleeve is mid-blue, with Bing superimposed on what appears to be a gold record. On the reverse - the sleeve is a nice glossy one by the way - is a good picture of Bing in black and white - his polka-dot bow-tie in evidence!

Sleeve notes are by PETE KLINE and they are fairly authoritative; the notes include "All of these Authorised Archive Recordings are derived from Bing Crosby's own private tape library", and:

> 'Bing conceived a new and distinctive approach to vocalising. Though there were others, he was the first...and most importantly, the best!' and.... 'Bing Crosby was an American original. These memorable moments from his radio programs are a brilliant example of his cherished legacy.'

The word 'program' is a further indication of its probable American origin. Can it be that the Crosby Estate is at last releasing material?

Now this is a very good album indeed; in fact its highly attractive in both content and quality of reproduction. The sound is the equal to modern commercial recordings. Most of us will be familiar with the items (or a lot of them) but its doubtful if they have been ava[illegible]ole in this quality before. Applause is included but NO commercials, or commercial patter.

EVERYBODY LOVES MY BABY is not the Firehouse Five + 2 version but is fine. The commercial issue of THAT'S A'PLENTY was itself a radio performance, but without having the opportunity to compare them too closely I feel this is a different version, every bit as good (if not better) than the commercial issue. And, Bing gives it a lengthy introduction, finishing up with naming 'The Dixieland Boys'. They are also named on the sleeve thus:

Red Nichols, cornet; Ted Vesley, trombone; Matty Matlock, clarinet; John Ruston, bass sax; Buddy Cole, piano; Perry Botkin, guitar; and Nick Fatool, drums.

Bing is in very good voice in these presumably random selections - and the 'duet' with George Burns - the ageless George - is really hilarious. It might be said, in fact, that this surprise issue has everything - excellent Bing, orchestra sounding great (really good transcription this) humour and romantic ballads - as you can see. Sung with Bing's feeling;..

As this is labelled Volume I we must hope that more radio material of this fine quality will follow. And the album is also available on cassette, says the sleeve.

PREVIOUS PAGE, 3rd PARAGRAPH, 3 lines up: We haven't lapsed into Russian! The phrase should read: "This chap is something different..."

And there is encouraging news for all those awaiting BING IN THE THIRTIES VOL 2 on the JSP label - and that means all of us, I imagine. Volume I sold well enough to make it a viable proposition, we are delighted to hear and indeed, Volume II is now beyond the 'test' pressing stage, and should appear during the first two weeks of December. The producers are delighted with the remastering of what are first-generation tapes and feel the finished thing to be better than that of commercial releases of the period. We understand questions have been asked as to why some of this material is being released in view of the fact that much of it has appeared on Spokane and/or Broadway issues. One reason is that

the two labels quoted are not too freely available; more importantly, a lot of money is being expended to produce the best possible results from what are, after all, ancient tapes, and 'acetates'.

The titles on Volume 2 (it hasn't yet a release number) are:

1. Marie
2. The folks who live on the hill
3. When you wore a tulip
4. If its the last thing I do.
5. The moon got in my eyes.
6. I don't want to get well
7. There's a girl in the heart of Maryland.
8. Can I forget you?
9. I still love to kiss you good-night
10. When you dream about Hawaii.

1. If its the last thing I do (2nd version)
2. Once in a while
3. That lonesome road.
4. Sweet stranger
5. Swinging down the lane
6. She's tall, she's tan, she's terrific
7. Once in a while (2nd version)
8. That old feeling
9. Rosalie
10. Remember me? (with Constance Bennett - parody)

We have heard from Derek Parkes, from whose collection the items come, as follows (in addition to the above:

> "We have been a little self-critical and are concerned that repeat titles on the one disc does not make for good listening, especially when arrangements are similar. We are considering that with future issues only the version in best quality will be retained. Rejected versions could subsequently appear on separate issues with additional material from other sources. I would appreciate hearing from anyone who is able to help in locating any such material.
>
> PLEASE LET ME KNOW IF YOU HAVE ANY DEFINITE VIEWS REGARDING DUPLICATE TITLES."

We've already gone over the ground regarding 'takes'; if you have views on duplicating of titles on one album, the address is:

DEREK PARKES,
66 FIRS RD.,
WINTERSLOW,
SALISBURY, WILTS.
SP5 1SW

The subject is radio material, of course - and let Derek know if you have material such as he describes which might be suitable for future issues. A real opportunity to express your views.

TRACK EVENTS proved more fruitful than at one time seemed likely - and we should emphasise the high quality of THE RADIO YEARS, VOLUME I. (page 33)

In case we have, unintentionally, made the above unnecessarily obscure, what DEREK PARKES is inviting can be summarised as follows:

(a) Your views on two (or more) versions of the same radio song on one album when the differences are barely detectable, and

(b) Do you have any rare Crosby material you think would be suitable for album issue? (It must, of course, be in condition good enough for transfer.

THIS IS A FACILITY FOR MEMBERS: ADVERTISEMENTS HERE ARE FREE (THO' WITH A NOMINAL CHARGE OF £1 FOR NON-CROSBY ITEMS) FOR RECORDS, TAPES, BOOKS, AND ALL ITEMS OF CROSBYANA. CONFINE ITEMS TO SIX LINES PLEASE.

TRADING POST

If you haven't indicated you want a copy of THE ROAD TO HOLLYWOOD, the mammoth revision and updating of the best Crosby film book written and compiled - lose no time. A deposit of £7.50 (final cost not yet decided but up to £15.00) secures.

This will be the hardback edition, and a companion volume to BING - JUST FOR THE RECORD. Its a hefty tome that will keep you browsing and referring to for always. AND, its not likely ever to be reprinted. This is not a 'sales' push for the fact is only the number ORDERED will be printed and, therefore, no losses will be encountered. The price will fit actual production cost with no profit motive. It is by FRED REYNOLDS certainly one of the most knowledgeable experts on all aspects of Bing's great career.

Publisher is JOHN JOYCE, 21 Birchfield Gardens, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear, NE9 7TJ. Its up to you - whether or not you want this incredibly comprehensive book on Bing and his films. Deposit to JOHN JOYCE as shewn.

TOM POULTON, 1 Moxhull Rd., Kingshurst, Birmingham, B37 6LH (021-770-5695) has RHYTHM ON THE RANGE (Coral album) to exchange for BING - RARE STYLE (Ace of Hearts) or, perhaps, any BING'S HOLLYWOOD.

WANTED: Bing's LE BING Brunswick 10-inch album LA8645. Any condition: your price. P. REEVES, Coxwalls Cottage, Ash End, Henstridge, Nr. Templecombe, Somerset, BA8 OPN

Does anyone know a gentleman by the name of JIMMIE GUY ? We had a query asking if he was in the Circle. He isn't, but apparently he was/is a keen Bing fan for he took his 78s to the war with him and one of his old mates would love to be in touch with him again. If you happen to know him - please drop a line to Mrs. Janet Snow, 102 Kings Rd., London Colney, Herts.

Seems we carried a story a couple of years ago about a firm which cast little statues of stars, among them Bing. I cannot trace it though I do recall it. If anyone knows would they kindly contact MR. SHELDON O'CONNELL, Post Office Box 89680, Honolulu, Hawaii, 96830, USA. - Sheldon will repay all expenses, post &c. Main object, I imagine, is for Sheldon to know if the statue is still available.

STAN WOODFORD writes: I have been greatly surprised and very pleased with the response to the notice you put in TRADING POST re. my offer to video tape copies of any of the Bing videos I have. I am happy to learn all recipients have been pleased with the results, even complimentary. Over the past months I've been extracting from my Crosby library a selection of songs spanning some 50 years and have successfully completed a

2-hour video (VHS) tape of 44 memorable and nostalgic songs. The quality is certainly acceptable and the sound very good. In view of the considerable amount of time and effort it has taken, a charge of £10 inclusive of post and packing would be reasonable and fair. I hope to include a full list of the film titles/dates from which came the songs; this would be sealed and used, if so desired, as a sort of quiz while the tape is viewed. Stan's address is 6 Mariam Gdns, Hornchurch, Essex RM12 6QA

BERT DAY, 35 Galla Crescent, Dalbeattie, Scotland, DG5 4JY now has nine volumes of Bing HARD TO GET 78s on C90's at £3 each UK and £4 air mail overseas. He will not carry on past the nine volumes as it covers those tracks not issued on LPs only. List of all titles on receipt of SAE.

MISS P. M. WOODWARD, 109 High St., Pershore, Worcs., WR10 1EQ asks for Bing's autobiography CALL ME LUCKY.

BING - JUST FOR THE RECORD remains available from JOHN JOYCE (see address above); this is the hardback volume, a complete discography of Bing's recordings from first to last, 1926-1977, in chronological and then alphabetical order, with vocal partners, musical directors, etc. The cost is £3.50 post paid. This is in answer to queries from newer members - stocks are now pretty low. Overseas members: Europe £4.00; US/Canadian £4.00 surface mail, £6.00 airmail. All remittances in sterling and payable to JOHN JOYCE, ICC A/C. It goes without saying no-one should be without this.

> YOUR EDITOR OWES A MASSIVE APOLOGY, HEREBY TENDERED, TO ALL THOSE WHO WROTE REGARDING REEL-TO-REEL. HE HAD THE NAIVE AND TOTALLY ERONEOUS IMPRESSION THAT BECAUSE HE HAD PUSHED SUCH TAPES INTO THE BACKGROUND EVERY-ONE ELSE HAD! HE KNOWS DIFFERENTLY NOW FOR HE RECEIVED AN AVALANACHE OF REQUESTS FOR DETAILS! ALAS, IT WOULD TAKE WEEKS OR MONTHS EVEN TO LISTEN AND CATALOGUE THEM. FURTHERMORE, AS THEY CANNOT BE COPIED THERE IS NO WAY HE CAN BE FAIR ABOUT IT. SO, PLEASE CONSIDER THE MATTER ABANDONED - WITH REGRET!

BOB JONES, 80 Beech St., Jarrow, Tyne & Wear offers tapes of Bing, Jolson, Dick Todd and many other artists. Send 12 x 3 inch envelope with 48 p stamp for catalogue.

BING - A VOICE FOR ALL SEASONS by SHELDON O'CONNELL, is available from KERRYMAN PUBLICATIONS, Tralee, Co. Kerry, Ireland - £10.

Bing ties in maroon/dark blue (either) with the silhouette motif (toning with almost any suit/outfit) now cost £3.50 + 20p P & P from BAXTER'S BADGE CENTRE, 13 Ropergate, Pontefract, West Yorks, WF8 1LL

The decorative peel-off Christmas mail labels (Bing in colour in the WHITE CHRISTMAS gear) are available from FRANK MURPHY, NEW COLOUR PHOTO CLUB, 32 Ferndale Aven., Wallsend, TYNE & WEAR NE28 7NE at £1.40 + 17p postage - size 1" x 1½". Very decorative for Christmas mail (in addition to post office stamps!) - there is still time!

SO, PHIL SILVERS has died...the comic genius, Sergeant Bilko. He was a good ffiend of Bing's and certainly the 'first' family. Bing told of Phil Silvers being at the ranch with his four boys in CALL ME LUCKY, and he was also, at one time, the audience 'warmer-up' for the Kraft Music Hall broadcasts.

And as most will remember with a chuckle, Bing appeared in one of the famous Bilko shows - without singing a note!

WHEN BOB WAS ENGAGED BY ANSON WEEKS as vocalist...to maximise the publicity advantages of the situation (i.e. Anson Weeks was presenting BOB CROSBY& Brother of BING!) it was stipulated that Bob had to visit Bing in Los Angeles before journeying on to San Francisco. It has been suggested that Bing virtually ignored Bob during the visit, but Bob denies this - "Bing gave me lots of advice on phrasing, and particularly showed me how to bring out certain words in the song's lyric, and emphasise them when he sang ..JUST ONE MORE CHANCE, things like that. He also got me fitted out with a good tuxedo. On the morning I was due to leave, Bing was lying down, suffering from a king-size hangover, all he could muster as parting advice was, 'Make sure you keep your nose clean'. I told a writer about this once, and it became a dramatic issue, as though that's all Bing could be bothered to say to me. It wasn't like that, and I got mad about the way the story had been angled.

AND FROM "PETER ALLIS" an autobiography:

> "How could one ever forget a week with the late BING CROSBY? At that time he was not too strong, frail, ageing. He was an entirely pleasant man, steeped of course in show business - he had quite the most astonishing wig I have ever seen which fitted sweet as a nut - but not one to talk much about it all. He was a good conversationalist, enjoyed his life, loved the game of golf, loved the people he found in golf, loved going to Scotland. He enjoyed his Scotch and soda at the end of the day, and did every single thing smoothly and quietly. One thing he said which I cannot forget was that every single day of his life he tried to learn something - a new word, a new phrase, a new thought, a new fact. Just something more about life. Pity more of us don't do just that."

A non-show-business assessment of Bing. PETER ALLIS, is of course, the celebrated golfer and TV commentator on the sport Bing loved. Its inevitable, no doubt, that so many people have found it compulsive to write on anyone so famous as Bing, and we've certainly had some assessments. This one draws a dignified, comforting, reassuring picture. One it is so easy to believe and accept.

There can be little doubt, however, that aside from his great talents as an entertainer, Bing was a complex man. One cannot help feeling that he seemed destined for greatness - his ease in any company, his love of words (and putting them together) his charm, his dignity, his charisma would have fitted him for many other callings - particularly the one his mother originally desired - the priesthood.

Our own particular choice for a career other than show-business - to which we must concede he was obviously born - would have been as an ambassador. In a sense he was such, perhaps America's greatest; but he would have been highly successful surely as a pukka diplomat-ambassador ?

To think he was making for that end-of-the-day Scotch and soda in Spain when fate stepped in...

BING Letters

PETER MURRAY, 5/5 Greendykes Drive, Edinburgh, EH16 4HL:

While on a visit to one of the record shops in Edinburgh I came across a rather unusual record. This shop has 78s mainly so I went to the jazz section and came across a Bing record. It was BLUE SHADOWS & WHITE GARDENIAS/MISS YOU. As I don't a record of this I snapped it up. On a closer look guess what I saw! MADE IN INDIA! Well, we all know Bing's records have been made in various countries but India, well, that was quite a surprise to me. It has the same matrix no. as the original, DLA 2847 and the label is Columbia, light blue. I was wondering if any of the members have this record?

Editor: To begin with, BLUE SHADOWS AND WHITE GARDENIAS is, as you will see, one of those good songs which has been curiously neglected - appearing on no LP. I'm sure, however, many members will have the Columbias light blue label MADE IN INDIA 78s Peter discovered. I have at least one - MOONLIGHT COCKTAIL and I must admit I was startled when I picked it up (about 15 yrs ago) and saw where it had been made. Reference to THE ROAD TO BING CROSBY shows that many of Bing's records were made there, particularly during the War years. Now, how they come to be here in Britain its impossible to say. We understand Peter being surprised. The following comment may be offered:

Columbia obviously had license to press and issue Crosby records from Decca. There was quite a large British presence in India at the time when independence was some years in the future - perhaps enough to make the Crosby records a good commercial proposition - there were the Forces, the Colonial administration, police, etc. etc. One cannot really believe that indigenous Indians, with their very individual sitar music, would be Crosby fans. Furthermore, it must be unlikely that they were made in India for export to Britain? Shipping was needed for other things, apart from having to dodge submarines! So, how are they to be found here in Britain? Returning servicemen? Civil servants? Its a possible answer; if anyone has a better we'd be pleased to hear.

For those who do not have the discography mentioned above, it lists the countries that issued Bing records as follows:

Argentine.	China	Germany	Norway	Sweden.
Australia.	Czecho-slovakia	India	Poland	Utd. States
Belgium	Holland	Ireland	South Africa	(of course!)
Brazil	England	Italy	Spain	
Canada	France	Japan	Switzerland	

What about China! As startling as India. There have been reports from time to time that Bing records were issued in Russia but so far as is known, this has never been totally verified. United States in the listing above does, of course, cover South America, e.g. Mexico, Columbia, Bolivia, Paraguay, etc. etc. Truly worldwide Bing issues!

R. GUMBRELL, 34 Hillyard St. London, SW9 ONL:

I'm so glad I wrote and joined the ICC. Its nice to hear the virtues and talent of Bing again as I am ageing and my friends and relations who were fans with me have either died or moved away. I don't know many people now who remember what an impact he made on everybody in the 1930's when he became famous and sang all the great songs that were written in that decade. A young friend of mine was surprised a few years ago when STARDUST

got in the charts again I told him that Bing recorded that song in 1931. He looked at me in disbelief. The disc-jockeys, too, are too young to know that Bing recorded all those great songs and what a great job he did with them.

Editor: True, but don't worry Mr. Gumbrell - you're with a host of friends now!

When writing about Renee Chester a page or so back we omitted to give her address, which is 48 Milton Rd., Hanwell, London, W7 1LE - phone 01-567-5560 until she leaves finally for Tenerife, when it will be:

Villa 27 G11, Chayofita, Costa del Silencio,
Tenerife, Canary Islands.

STAN PHILLIPS, 45 Russell Mount, Branksome Wood Rd., Bournemouth: I have just seen Teddy Johnson's BING CROSBY STORY at the Pier Theatre for the third time. Its still playing to packed houses. Must be a lot of Bing fans around.

J. . LIDDIARD, 90 Treswell Rd., Dagenham, Essex RM9 6XJ: I recently acquired some 78s of Bing, including the 1934 TEMPTATION. They are in a playable condition but I was wondering if you knew of anywhere I could get them fully restored?

Editor: A question we get asked many times; the answer is No, for they are beyond redemption (to coin a phrase). We've known people clean and polish them with everything from Fairy Liquid to Cherry Blossom Boot Polish with no audible improvement. The reason is that most 30's records were subjected to the savagery of steel needles! Its a miracle they survived that. Professional 'restorers' for LP albums use very sophisticated equipment to eliminate as far as possible inherent surface hiss, but a worn record its almost impossible to do anything with. All is not lost, however, for putting them on cassette 'Dolbyised' does help to minimise the snap, crackle and pop.

ALBERT SAMPLES, 33 Tawney St., Boston, Lincs, PE21 6PA: Some time ago I saw the Gus Arnheim album advertised in the Jazz Journal and I phoned the shop only to be told they had sold all the ten copies they had but that they would be receiving more. Price was just over £8 plus postage.

I recently paid a visit to a second hand shop in Nottingham and asked if they had any of Bing's albums. The answer was "I think so..yes, two or maybe three, one is a 10-inch" I tried to look faintly interested and nonchalant - but a a 10-inch! Wow! They're like gold-dust. And he produced a copy of Bing Vol 2, The Early 30's: price £3.00! Then he came up with BING ON THE HAPPY SIDE in good condition, also £3.00. A couple of weeks later I took him a couple of jazz books and did a straight swop for BING SINGS WHILE BREGMAN SWINGS which was unplayed.

I would be interested to know why in some of the KMH shows now being listed Bing sings four songs, while in others he sings one?

Editor: So, the Gus Arnheim album WAS here! This is the one with two hitherto unknown air-shots of Bing with that band we got so excited about. Albert illustrates the unexpected joys of a Bing collector - I don't know what Barry Whittingham - who lives in Nottingham - will say about this!

As regards KMH, these shows did not always follow a set pattern - sometimes topical events intruded to change the pattern, leaving less time for singing. Sometimes (again) we do not have the full details, hence the seeming scarce-song programmes. Depended too on the number of guests - and the fact that the shows went down from 1 hr to ½hr.

NEIL DALY (Northants) At our conference in Brighton last year a colleague and I noticed a photo of Bing and other locals in the hotel lobby. My friend, Dr. Tom Smith mentioned he had seen the Palladium show of the time of the photo and what an outstanding evening it had been.

Tom and I met again last week at the bar in Belgium (terrible beer!). Upon my urging, he described the show in more detail - the Crosby voice and charisma, Clooney et al. Assuming he had seen only a few celebrities I asked how he ranked, or compared, them with Bing at the Palladium. To my utter astonishment he then revealed he had been in the band business (I forget his instrument now). He had played for the Crosby Brothers at Las Vegas but had no glowing comments on them personally or professionally. But he spent some time with the Bobcats, replacing Eddie Miller on the road. He considered Bob Crosby a great guy and a great musician (by instinct) and went on to say what an ordinary, down-to-earth fellow he was, with no pretentions whatever (a family trait?) And Bob always spoke of his brother favorably and most affectionately.

So when Tom Smith told me the Crosby show in London was the very best of the best entertainment he's ever seen, it seems a particularly keen, valid and most welcome comment of the show-biz scene. And Tom is now aware of the ICC.

Editor: A little explanation is called for here: We know Neil's address, but he is American, a headmaster in the US Department of Defense which caters for the education of American children in US overseas bases. There may be no objection to printing the address but we'll play safe and not do so in case we're offending some Official Secrets Act! Neil has our sympathy in one direction: before being posted here in the murk and gloom, not to mention the rain, he was stationed for three years - IN BERMUDA! This reference to Bob Crosby and the Bobcats gives us the opportunity to offer our grateful acknowledgements to the book we've already mentioned: STOMP OFF - LET'S GO, by John Chilton, paperback £6.75.

LES BRICE, 40 Crown Road, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex CO15 1AT:

Please print all known details of every album that comes out. I don't begrudge them to anyone who is fortunate enough to get them even if I can't. And if we want them bad enough somehow we'll get them - but we can't even start if we don't know they are about. One other point: I would like to see more of the members' letters in the mag. Its fascinating reading the different views, etc. that other people have on Bing, and I personally am always coming across things I never knew before, or statements that make me stop and re-think an attitude or idea I've always had.

Never having seen DIXIE before, I was delighted when it appeared on TV. I must admit, however, I can't see why Bing agreed to make a film where he was blacked-up most of the time. I honestly thought that it was completely pointless to have the top film star of the age seemingly acting in disguise - and playing such an unsympathetic role. I wouldn't put DIXIE anywhere in my Top Ten of Crosby films. And isn't it strange the master never recorded the big song DIXIE - nor THE LAST ROSE OF SUMMER. The snippet we heard was beautiful.

Editor: Good points Les. We've had much mail on the subject, and overwhelmingly members want ALL the albums that come to our notice reviewed and listed - so, it shall be done! Its not that we ever begrudged them to anyone, but isolated mail had indicated frustration reading about albums they were never likely to see.

Regarding more members' letters, its a simple question of space. Letters ARE a popular feature but it would be of great assistance if Les had given us an example of what should be OMITTED to make way for the letters. We like guidance!

Les Brice's views on the film DIXIE are highly individual! Members may like to know that this film drew more mail/comments than any other shewn - but most mail is taken up with those who desperately want to see - MISSISSIPPI! The reason is the range of beautiful songs in that film - as well as Bing and W.C.Fields! However -

RAY MORRIS, 35 St. Ives Grove, Leeds, West Yorks, LS12 3RR: Remembering the little discussion I started in BING when I asked what had happened to the film DIXIE (it was advanced that the colour aspect prevented it being shewn in the modern climate) you can imagine with what joy I had when it was finally screened. What a really enjoyable film it is. I would like all Bing's films on video but I have never waited so long for the second viewing of a film! I saw it in 1943 and have wanted to see it again ever since. That's 42 years by my computer!

And on the subject of DIXIE, I wonder what might have happened if Bing had teamed up with Billy de Wolfe before making the 'Road' films with Bob Hope? At the risk of offending some Hope fans I must say I have never regarded him as a good light comedian and put my head on the chopping block by declaring that I think Billy de Wolfe was more accomplished in that line, and would have made Bing a better partner. Just a matter of opinion.

Editor: Hmmmm....we'll wait and see!

Will members who (kindly) send us excerpts/extracts from books which they consider may be of interest for use here please remember to include the AUTHOR of the book, and the PUBLISHER. This is in case we do not know the book - and it is essential we give due acknowledgement when such extracts are used)

CHAS. MARTIN, 18 Wootton Green Lane, Balsall Common, Nr. Coventry, CV7 7EZ: I mentioned to you previously that I was hoping to get Barry Norman to autograph my copy of his book, THE HOLLYWOOD GREATS thro' the medium of my daughter and her husband who meet him and his family every year in Spain. Well, they managed it this year, and he was pleased to sign, along with a comment which goes:

> "To Chas: I hope you'll decide as I do that Bing was no angel - but he was something special for all that. With very best wishes,
>
> BARRY NORMAN."

I suppose its in keeping with the general tone of the theme !

This up-to-date version of FRED REYNOLDS'S 'THE ROAD TO HOLLYWOOD' looks fabulous; I have the paperback version Fred sent me on original publication but I'm certainly sending off my deposit for the revised version.

> SEEMS THE BBC AT PEBBLE MILL (BIRMINGHAM) ADVERTISED FOR A BING CROSBY LOOK-ALIKE (modern phraseology for someone who looks like Bing); but the BBC may have to cancel plans to film a special WHITE CHRISTMAS video. Only one man presented himself for the part - and now he has disappeared.
>
> (Press reports).

ONE OF THE VENUES to be visited by the American BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY members on their now-abandoned European trip, which included BING'S BRITAIN, was ST. MARY'S CHURCH, SOUTHAMPTON, reputed to be the inspiration for the song of that name well projected by Bing in the film of the same name. Southampton members had every hope that Bing

would visit the church during one of his mid-70's visits and we duly reported on the possibility at the time. In the event, Bing didn't get around to it. But the story was revived in some newspapers as a result of finding out about the proposed 1985 visit, so some newer members sent us the cuttings that appeared.

In fact, there did seem a chance that Bing would not only visit the church but actually sing the song there. Alas, it was not to be. But it was a nice story. Thanks to those who sent the cuttings.

There was a recent auction of jewellery &c. from the estate of LOUIS ARMSTRONG and LUCILLE ARMSTRONG. Prominently illustrated in the catalogue was a "GOLD MONEY CLIP AND WATCH COMBINATION: 14kt Yellow gold, engraved with 'TO MY FRIEND SATCHMO FROM POPPA BING'. The suggested value was 1800-2000 dollars. Auction was in America, of course.

MRS. PAULA SANGSTER, 70 Santers Lane, Potters Bar, Herts, EN6 2DA would be grateful to know if any one has, or can do, a video of Bing's SONGS (from films) on the BETA system?

Continuing the exploits (if that is the word)of ENA HOOLEY (awaiting operations on her knees/hips) among her latest excursions have been a trip to London, where she was met by BR officials who took her to the theatre to see her favourite actor, Anthony Hopkins; and a visit to Windsor Safari Park where she was again given VIP treatment, including an invitation to feed the killer whales. Which she accepted !

Member MERVYN THOMAS of Worthing has a friendship with the sister of John Scott Trotter in the States and recently received some very private and unpublished photographs from her. One showed Bing at a christening, whose we couldn't determine, but the photograph included (quite informally) JST., Mel Torme, Pat O'Brien, Bob Hope, Dixie Lee - and PHIL SILVERS!

JOHN MARSHALL who, as you know, is the originator of the IN MEMORIAM notice in VARIETY is particularly anxious that we publish the list of subscribers to the cost of the entry:

Ted Berryman; Arthur Blood, Reg Bristo, Leslie Crowther, Michael Collins; John Coomes; Audrey Cooper; Arne Fogel (US); Leslie Gaylor; Ena Hooley; Gwen Harvey; Len Hawkings; Johnny Jones; Seamus Kelly; Frans van der Kolff; Ian Lawrence; Bob Lundberg (US); Frank Murphy; Hob Machliss (Australia); Mary & Isobel McAdam; John Marshall; Thos. Mooney; Jack McCarron; George O'Reilly; Sheldon O'Connell; George Patmore; Bill Paddon; Girvan Paterson; Denis Saville; Cab Smith; Barry Sandercock; Ken Twiss (US); Fred Tilt; Gordon Wesley; Trevor Wagstaff, Phyllis Woodward.

John reports he is in the happy position of having £130 towards next year's memorial notice. Well done, John.

Frans van der Kolff is our good friend/member in Amsterdam.

IF THE SUBS REMINDER "X" APPEARS ON PAGE 5 EARLY REMITTANCE IS VERY HELPFUL - AND ENSURES YOU GET THE NEXT ISSUE IN MARCH. YOU WANT TO -

"START THE NEW YEAR RIGHT !"

BING CROSBY - THE CREMO SINGER

"Lend a little ear to my pleas..."

WE DID!

Bing's songs in CAPITALS; remaining item orchestral:

WEDS. 23 December 1931

A FADED SUMMER LOVE
NOBODY'S SWEETHEART
Hits from 'The Cat & the Fiddle'.
OUT OF NOWHERE

THURS. 24 December 1931

MY SONG
UNDER THE MISTLETOE
Christmas Carol
HOME.

FRI. 25 December 1931

SLEEPY TIME DOWN SOUTH
LIFE IS JUST A BOWL OF CHERRIES
One little quarrel
CAN'T WE BE FRIENDS?

SAT. 26 December 1931

WHAT DID YOU DO WITH IT?
WALKIN' ON AIR
Love goes on just the same.
YOU'RE MY EVERYTHING

MON. 28 December 1931

CAN'T WE TALK IT OVER?
WHY DID IT HAVE TO BE ME?
Deep Water
I SURRENDER, DEAR.

TUES. 29 December 1931

WITH A SONG IN MY HEART
ITS THE DARNDEST THING
El Choclo
WHEN WE'RE ALONE

WEDS. 30 December 1931

TOO LATE
I'VE GOT FIVE DOLLARS
When hearts are young
YOU TAUGHT ME HOW TO LOVE YOU

THURS. 31 December 1931

BEAUTIFUL LOVE
SOME OF THESE DAYS
You try somebody else
YOU DIDN'T KNOW THE MUSIC

"You'll eliminate all rivals soon.."

HE DID!

FRIDAY, 1 January 1932

I'M THANKFUL
IT HAD TO BE YOU
I promise you
HERE IS MY HEART

SATURDAY, 2 January 1932

SAVE THE LAST DANCE FOR ME
OOH! THAT KISS
Hits from 'Music Box' revue
MY WOMAN

MONDAY, 4 January 1932

FATE INTRODUCED ME TO YOU
BETWEEN THE DEVIL & THE DEEP BLUE SEA
I wouldn't change you for the world
ALL OF ME

TUESDAY, 5 January 1932

WRAP YOUR TROUBLES IN DREAMS
GOOD NIGHT, MOON
Do it again / Kalua medley.
I FOUND YOU

WEDNESDAY, 6 January 1932

WHAT DID YOU DO WITH IT?
I'VE GOT FIVE DOLLARS
Hits from 'Okay'
TELL ME WITH A LOVE SONG

THURSDAY, 7 January 1932

OH! WHAT A THRILL
SOME OF THESE DAYS
Pagan moon
I SURRENDER, DEAR.

FRIDAY, 8 January 1932

SLEEPY TIME DOWN SOUTH
YOU TOOK ADVANTAGE OF ME
I'm always chasing rainbows/Look for the silver lining.
HERE IS MY LOVE SONG.

SATURDAY, 9 January 1932

JUST ONE MORE CHANCE
AN EVENING IN CAROLINA
Just friends
AN OLD-FASHIONED GIRL

MONDAY, 11 January 1932

STARDUST
CONCENTRATIN' ON YOU
Waltzes from the operetta 'Sari'.
HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?

TUESDAY, 12 JANUARY 1932

I'M SORRY, DEAR.
MY HAPPINESS
All of me
MEET ME TONIGHT, DEAR OLD PAL

WEDNESDAY, 13 January 1932

TOO LATE
WHY DID IT HAVE TO BE ME?
In the shadows.
SAVE THE LAST DANCE FOR ME

THURSDAY, 14 January 1932

RIVER, STAY WAY FROM MY DOOR.
WHO'S YOUR LITTLE WHO'ZIS?
Fate introduced you to me
THE MORE YOU HURT ME.

FRIDAY, 15 January 1932

YOU TRY SOMEBODY ELSE
I WOULDN'T CHANGE YOU FOR THE WORLD
The Kashmiri Song
CALL ME DARLING.

SATURDAY, 16 January 1932

CAN'T WE TALK IT OVER?
WHEN NOBODY ELSE IS AROUND
As time goes by
I FOUND YOU

MONDAY, 18 January 1932

STARLIGHT
I'M ONLY GUESSING
'Showboat' medley
ON MIAMI SHORE.

TUESDAY, 19 January 1932

I KISS YOUR HAND, MADAME
'LEVEN POUNDS OF HEAVEN
When day is done
SOMEWHERE IN THE WEST

WEDNESDAY, 20 January 1932

A FADED SUMMER LOVE
GOTTA GO TO TOWN
Kiss by kiss
AUF WIEDERSEHEN, MY DEAR.

THURSDAY, 21 January 1932

OH!. WHAT A THRILL
YOU'RE FOOLING YOURSELF
(Orchestral interlude not identified)
BEAUTIFUL MELODY OF LOVE

FRIDAY, 22 January 1932

ALL OF ME
TAKE YOUR TIME
'No, no, Nanette' selection.
ONE MORE KISS, THEN GOODNIGHT

SATURDAY, 23 January 1932

CAN'T WE TALK IT OVER?
LILY OF THE VALLEY
Dancing on the ceiling
OUT OF NOWHERE

(to be continued)

What a fantastic start in radio that was for Bing, more than half a century ago! Almost as much as Wogan on TV (he's not on every night - it just seems like it, so we're told! We don't have time to view) Six nights a week, singing in that 'Mack Sennett' short voice every night. And virtually all of it gone for ever....if only they had tape recorders at that time!

> Incidentally, if you want a Christmas quiz during a lull, go thro' the Cremo listing marking off the songs Bing commercially recorded contemporaneously - then check with BING - JUST FOR THE RECORD!

The Kraft Music Hall listings will be resumed in the next issue of BING.

THE BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY: It cannot be denied, alas, that the Society has, to an extent, fallen into the doldrums; our genial friend KEN TWISS, always the inspiration, has had personal problems, funds have run dangerously low. The abandoning of the much-vaunted visit to Europe this summer (1985) was another blow to its enthusiasm. Happily, and we're really delighted to learn this, the November newsletter shows that things are on the upgrade and a new impetus seems to have permeated the Society. Current aims, with the first easily the major, include the acquisition of the Crosby birthplace home but at just over 6000 dollars the funds are well short. A vigorous, enterprising fund-raiser-administrator is being sought to pursue this worthy aim. We have a fund here in Britain lying in the bank gathering interest which will be forwarded to the BCHS just as soon as they say the word, i.e. when purdhase seems an imminent possibility. A commemorative stamp in honour of Bing in America is getting enormous support from celebrities - and a bumper event is planned for next year's Tribute in the first week of May.

Donations, no matter how small, towards the birthplace fund, may be sent to MRS. BIGNELL, 21 St. Andrews Aven., Wembley, Midd'x, HAO 2BQ -) KEN TWISS, BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, PO BOX 216, TACOMA, WA. 98401, USA (note new box no) Subscription is ten dollars BUT, to encourage newcomers and present members to build up a fund, there is a special offer: 2 years for 17.50 dollars; 3 years for 25.00; 4 years for 32.50 or 5 years for 40 dollars. There is a regular release, not a magazine, but a Newsletter keeping members abreast of what is going on. Many ICC people are already members.

In addition to the New Colour Photo Club (Frank Murphy - mentioned in TRADING POST) we call your attention to THE VICTORIAN BING CROSBY SOCIETY (BOB MACHLISS, PO BOX 422, South Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, 3205 BUT note KEITH PARKINSON, address on page 5, is the UK representative to whom you should write if interested. They have a good magazine.

Now, it is time to give you our final good wishes for this coming Yuletide season. The signs at end-November are ominous in the weather sense and WHITE CHRISTMAS might easily change from a charming, sentimental, Christmas carol, so beautifully sung by Bing, to the harsh reality of an ice-bound environment! Still, there's Bing - and be thankful for that. If you've seen any of the 'horror' videos now being splashed around on the TV commercials in the name of music, telling us that it is "wonderful music" - reflect our lucky we are !

Take care; be full of goodwill and spread it around ! Have the sort of Christmas you want....that's our wish.